SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE.

VOL. II. DECEMBER, 1887. No. 6.

TICONDEROGA.

By Robert Louis Stevenson.

THIS is the tale of the man
Who heard a word in the night
In the land of the heathery hills,
In the days of the feud and the fight.
By the sides of the rainy sea,
Where never a stranger came,
On the awful lips of the dead,
He heard the outlandish name.
It sang in his sleeping ears,
It hummed in his waking head:
The name—Ticonderoga,
The utterance of the dead.

I.

On the loch-sides of Appin,
When the mist blew from the sea,
A Stewart stood with a Cameron:
An angry man was he.
The blood beat in his ears,
The blood ran hot to his head,
The mist blew from the sea,
And there was the Cameron dead.

"O, what have I done to my friend,
O, what have I done to mysel',
That he should be cold and dead,
And I in the danger of all?
Nothing but danger about me,
Danger behind and before,
Death at wait in the heather
In Appin and Mamore,
Hate at all of the ferries
And death at each of the fords,
Camerons priming gunlocks
And Camerons sharpening swords."

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But this was a man of counsel,
This was a man of a score,
There dwelt no pawkier Stewart
In Appin or Mamore.
He looked on the blowing mist,
He looked on the awful dead,
And there came a smile on his face
And there slipped a thought in his head.

Out over cairn and moss,
Out over scrog and scaur,
He ran as runs the clansman
That bears the cross of war.
His heart beat in his body,
His hair clove to his face,
When he came at last in the gloaming
To the dead man's brother's place.
The east was white with the moon,
The west with the sun was red,
And there, in the house-doorway,
Stood the brother of the dead.

"I have slain a man to my danger,
I have slain a man to my death.
I put my soul in your hands,"
The panting Stewart saith.
"I lay it bare in your hands,
For I know your hands are leal;
And be you my targe and bulwark
From the bullet and the steel."

Then up and spoke the Cameron,
And gave him his hand again:
"There shall never a man in Scotland
Set faith in me in vain;
And whatever man you have slaughtered,
Of whatever name or line,
By the bread of life and the steel of war,
I make your quarrel mine.
I bid you in to my fireside,
I share with you house and hall;
It stands upon my honor
To see you safe from all."

It fell in the time of midnight,
When the fox barked in the den
And the plaids were over the faces
In all the houses of men,
That as the living Cameron
Lay sleepless on his bed,
Out of the night and the other world,
Came in to him the dead.

"My blood is on the heather,
My bones are on the hill;
There is joy in the home of ravens
That the young shall eat their fill.

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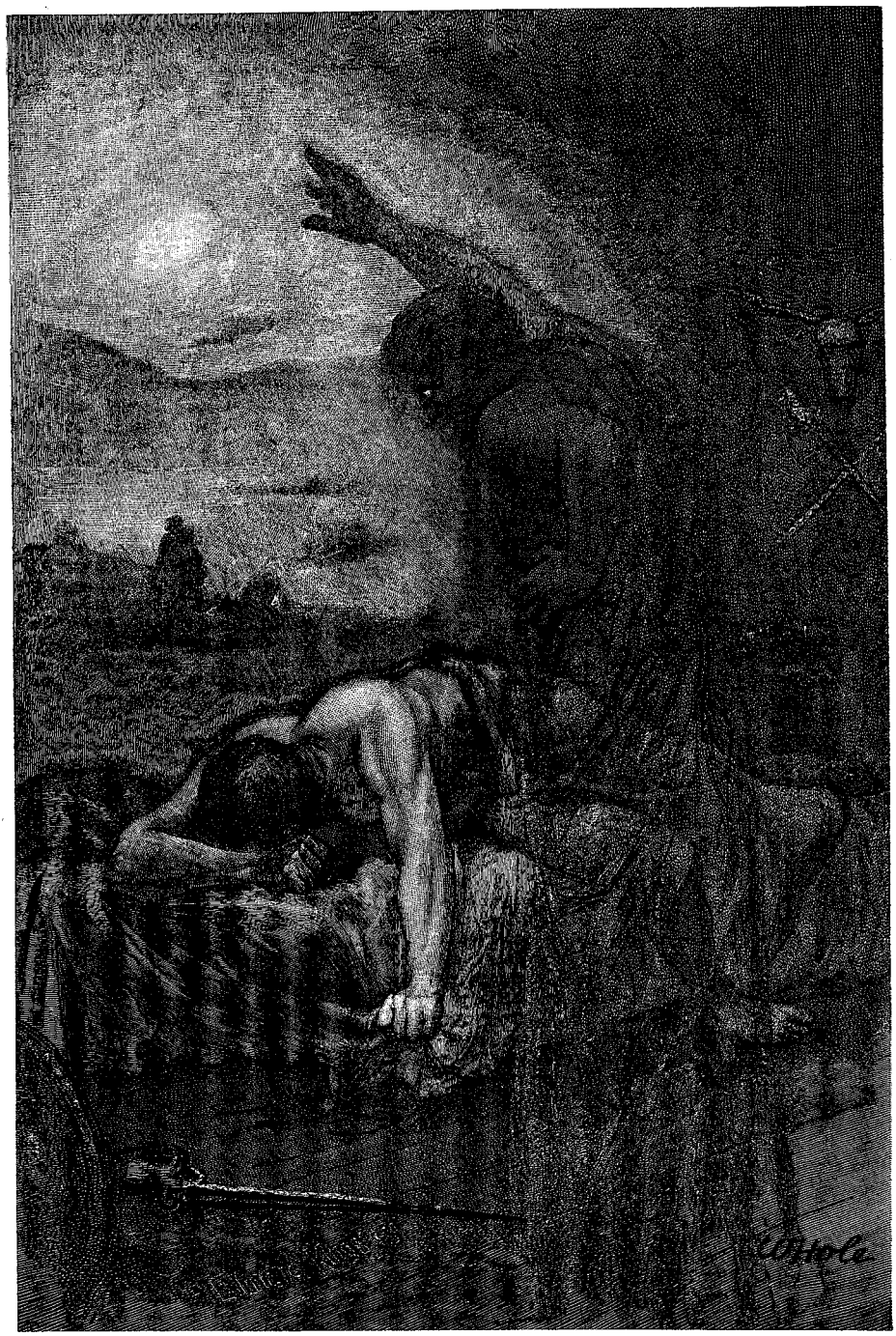

"Out of the night and the other world
Came in to him the dead."

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My blood is poured in the dust,
My soul is spilled in the air;
And the man that has undone me
Sleeps in my brother's care."

"I'm wae for your death, my brother,
But if all of my house were dead,
I couldnae withdraw the plighted hand,
Nor break the word once said."

"O, what shall I say to our father,
In the place to which I fare?
O, what shall I say to our mother,
Who greets to see me there?
And to all the kindly Camerons
That have lived and died long-syne—
Is this the word you send them,
Fause-hearted brother mine?"

"It's neither fear nor duty,
It's neither quick nor dead
Shall gar me withdraw the plighted hand,
Or break the word once said."

Thrice in the time of midnight,
When the fox barked in the den,
And the plaids were over the faces
In all the houses of men,
Thrice as the living Cameron
Lay sleepless on his bed,
Out of the night and the other world
Came in to him the dead,
And cried to him for vengeance
On the man that laid him low;
And thrice the living Cameron
Told the dead Cameron, no.

"Thrice have you seen me, brother,
But now shall see me no more,
Till you meet your angry fathers
Upon the farther shore.
Thrice have I spoken, and now,
Before the cock be heard,
I take my leave forever
With the naming of a word.
It shall sing in your sleeping ears,
It shall hum in your waking head,
The name—Ticonderoga,
And the warning of the dead."

Now when the night was over
And the time of people's fears,
The Cameron walked abroad,
And the word was in his ears.
"Many a name I know,
But never a name like this;
O, where shall I find a skilly man
Shall tell me what it is?"

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With many a man he counselled
Of high and low degree,
With the herdsmen on the mountains,
And the fishers of the sea.
And he came and went unweary,
And read the books of yore,
And the runes that were written by men of old
On stones upon the moor.
And many a name he was told,
But never the name of his fears—
Never, in east or west,
The name that rang in his ears:
Names of men and of clans,
Names for the grass and the tree,
For the smallest tarn in the mountains—
The smallest reef in the sea:
Names for the high and low,
The names of the crag and the flat;
But in all the land of Scotland,
Never a name like that.

II.

And now there was speech in the south,
And a man of the south that was wise,
A periwig'd lord of London,
Called on the clans to rise.
And the riders rode, and the summons
Came to the western shore,
To the land of the sea and the heather,
To Appin and Mamore.
It called on all to gather
From every scrog and scaur,
That loved their fathers' tartan
And the ancient game of war.
And down the watery valley
And up the windy hill,
Once more, as in the olden time,
The pipes were sounding shrill;
Again in highland sunshine
The naked steel was bright;
And the lads, once more in tartan,
Went forth again to fight.

"O why should I dwell here
With a weird upon my life,
When the clansmen shout for battle
And the war-swords clash in strife?
I cannae joy at feast,
I cannae sleep in bed,
For the wonder of the word
And the warning of the dead.
It sings in my sleeping ears,
It hums in my waking head,
The name — Ticonderoga,
The utterance of the dead.

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Then up, and with the fighting men
To march away from here,
Till the cry of the great war-pipe
Shall drown it in my ear!"

Where flew King George's ensign
The plaided soldiers went:
They drew the sword in Germany,
In Flanders pitched the tent.
The bells of foreign cities
Rang far across the plain:
They passed the happy Rhine,
They drank the rapid Main.
Through Asiatic jungles
The Tartans filed their way,
And the neighing of the war-pipes
Struck terror in Cathay.

"Many a name have I heard," he thought,
In all the tongues of men,
Full many a name both here and there,
Full many both now and then.
When I was at home in my father's house
In the land of the naked knee,
Between the eagles that fly in the lift
And the herrings that swim in the sea,
And now that I am a captain-man
With a braw cockade in my hat —
Many a name have I heard," he thought,
"But never a name like that."

III.

There fell a war in a woody place,
Lay far across the sea,
A war of the march in the mirk midnight
And the shot from behind the tree,
The shaven head and the painted face,
The silent foot in the wood,
In a land of a strange outlandish tongue
That was hard to be understood.

It fell about the gloaming
The general stood with his staff,
He stood and he looked east and west
With little mind to laugh.
"Far have I been and much have I seen
And kent both gain and loss,
But here we have woods on every hand
And a kittle water to cross.
Far have I been and much have I seen
But never the beat of this;
And there's one must go down to that waterside
To see how deep it is."

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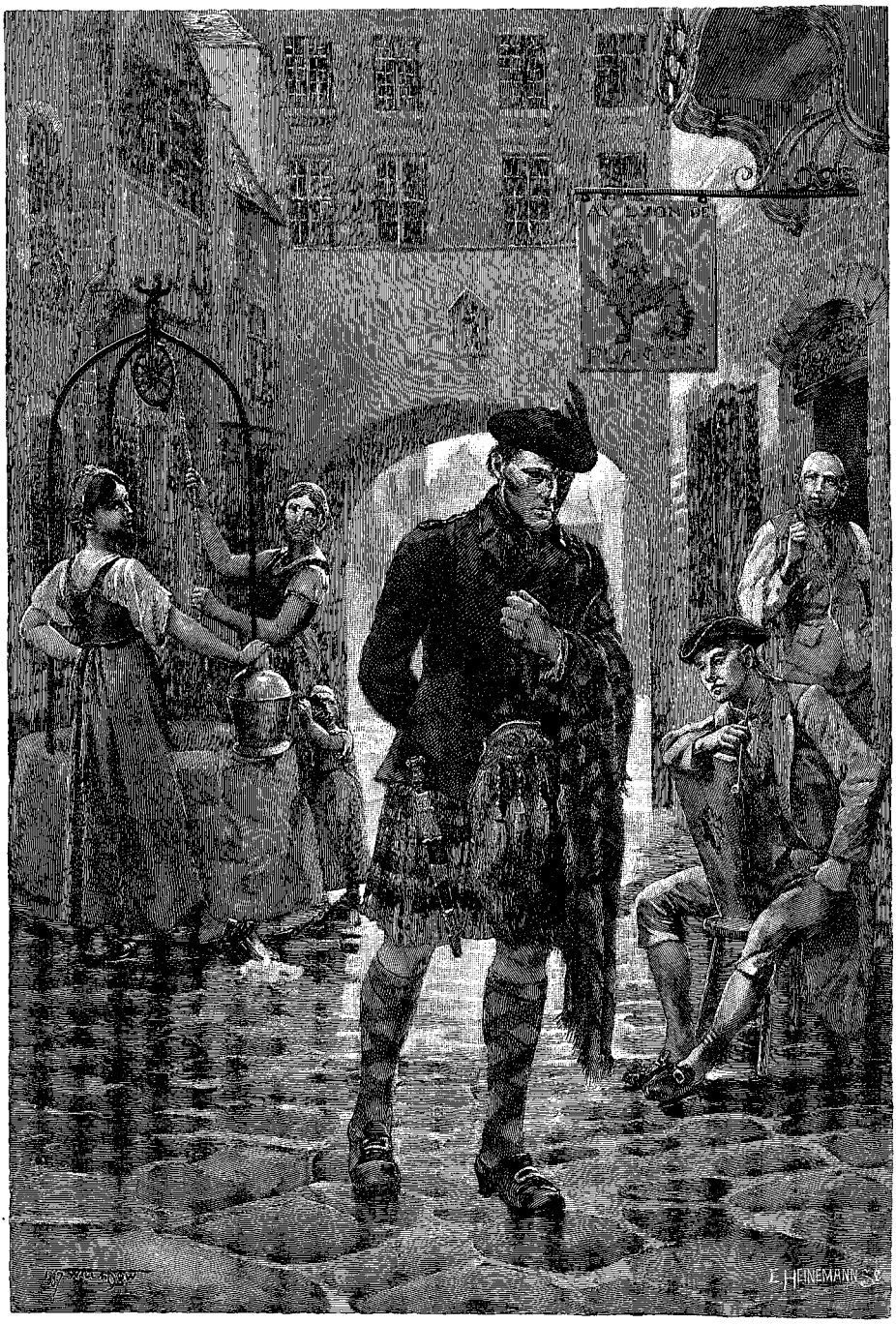

"Many a name have I heard," he thought,
"But never a name like that."

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It fell in the dusk of the night
When unco things betide,
The skilly captain, the Cameron,
Went down to that waterside.
Canny and soft the captain went;
And a man of the woody land,
With the shaven head and the painted face,
Went down at his right hand.
It fell in the quiet night,
There was never a sound to ken;
But all of the woods to the right and the left
Lay filled with the painted men.

"Far have I been and much have I seen
Both as a man and boy,
But never have I set forth a foot
On so perilous an employ."

It fell in the dusk of the night
When unco things betide,
That he was aware of a captain-man
Drew near to the waterside.
He was aware of his coming
Down in the gloaming alone;
And he looked in the face of the man,
And lo! the face was his own.

"This is my weird," he said,
"And now I ken the worst;
For many shall fall the morn,
But I shall fall with the first.
O you of the outland tongue,
You of the painted face,
This is the place of my death;
Can you tell me the name of the place?"

"Since the Frenchmen have been here
They have called it Sault-Marie;
But that is a name for priests,
And not for you and me.
It went by another word,"
Quoth he of the shaven head:
"It was called Ticonderoga
In the days of the great dead."

And it fell on the morrow's morning,
In the fiercest of the fight,
That the Cameron bit the dust
As he foretold at night;
And far from the hills of heather,
Far from the isles of the sea,
He sleeps in the place of the name
As it was doomed to be.

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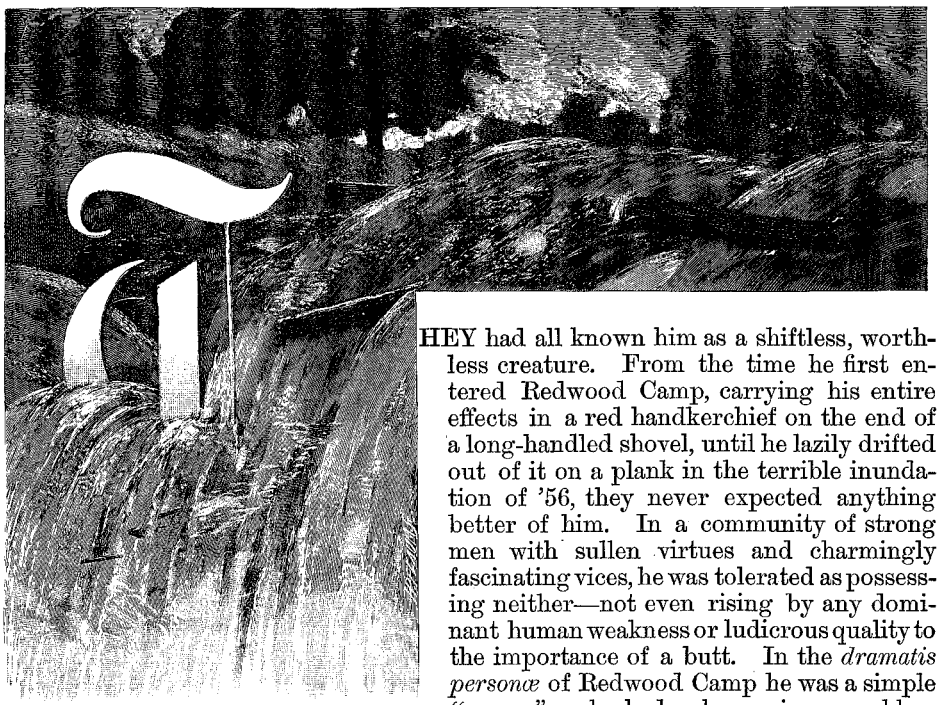
A DRIFT FROM REDWOOD CAMP.

By Bret Harte.



THEY had all known him as a shiftless, worthless creature. From the time he first entered Redwood Camp, carrying his entire effects in a red handkerchief on the end of a long-handled shovel, until he lazily drifted out of it on a plank in the terrible inundation of '56, they never expected anything better of him. In a community of strong men with sullen virtues and charmingly fascinating vices, he was tolerated as possessing neither—not even rising by any dominant human weakness or ludicrous quality to the importance of a butt. In the *dramatis personæ* of Redwood Camp he was a simple "super"—who had only passive, speechless rôles in those fierce dramas that were sometimes unrolled beneath its green-curtained pines. Nameless and penniless, he was overlooked by the census and ignored by the tax collector, while in a hotly-contested election for sheriff, when even the head-boards of the scant cemetery were consulted to fill the poll-lists, it was discovered that neither candidate had thought fit to avail himself of his actual vote. He was debarred the rude heraldry of a nickname of achievement, and in a camp made up of "Euchre Bills," "Poker Dicks," "Profane Pete," and "Snap-shot Harry," was known vaguely as "him," "Skeesicks," or "that coot." It was remembered long after, with a feeling of superstition, that he had never even met with the dignity of an accident, nor received the fleeting honor of a chance shot meant for somebody else in any of the liberal and broadly comprehensive encounters which distinguished the camp. And the inundation that finally carried him out of it was partly anticipated by his passive incompetency, for while the others escaped—or were drowned in escaping—he calmly floated off on his plank without an opposing effort.

For all that, Elijah Martin—which was his real name—was far from being unamiable or repellent. That he was cowardly, untruthful, selfish, and lazy, was undoubtedly the fact; perhaps it was his peculiar misfortune that, just then, courage, frankness, generosity, and activity were the dominant factors in the life of Redwood Camp. His submissive gentleness, his unquestioned modesty, his half refinement, and his amiable exterior consequently availed him nothing against the fact that he was missed during a raid of the Digger Indians, and lied to account for it; or that he lost his right to a gold discovery by failing to make it

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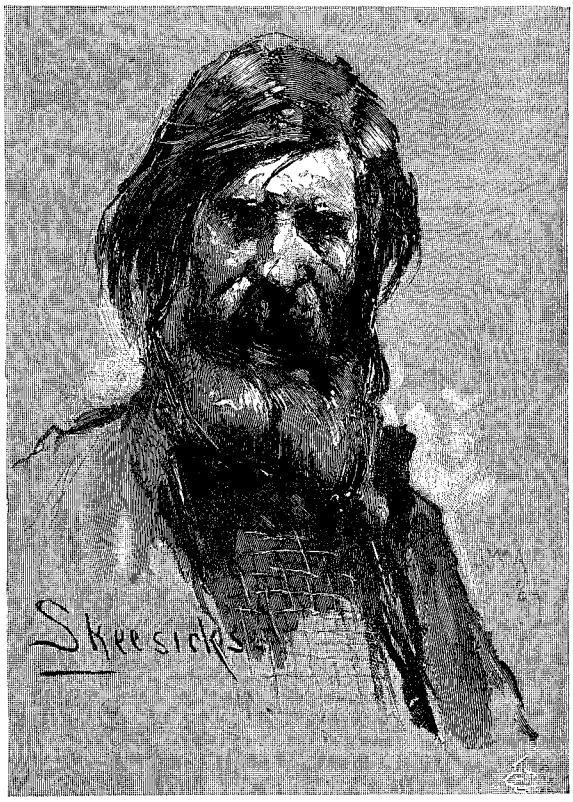
good against a bully, and selfishly kept this discovery from the knowledge of the camp. Yet this weakness awakened no animosity in his companions, and it is probable that the indifference of the camp to his fate in this final catastrophe came purely from a simple forgetfulness of one who at that supreme moment was weakly incapable.

Such was the reputation and such the antecedents of the man who, on the 15th of March, 1856, found himself adrift in a swollen tributary of the Minyo. A



spring freshet of unusual volume had flooded the adjacent river until, bursting its bounds, it escaped through the narrow, wedge-shaped valley that held Redwood Camp. For a day and a night the surcharged river poured half its waters through the straggling camp. At the end of that time every vestige of the little settlement was swept away; all that was left was scattered far and wide in the country, caught in the hanging branches of water-side willows and alders, embayed in sluggish pools, dragged over submerged meadows, and one fragment —bearing up Elijah Martin—pursuing the devious courses of an unknown tributary fifty miles away. Had he been a rash, impatient man, he would have been speedily drowned in some earlier desperate attempt to reach the shore; had he been an ordinarily bold man, he would have succeeded in transferring himself to the branches of some obstructing tree; but he was neither, and he clung to his broken raft-like berth with an endurance that was half the paralysis of terror and half the patience of habitual misfortune. Eventually he was caught in a side current, swept to the bank, and cast ashore on an unexplored wilderness.

His first consciousness was one of hunger that usurped any sentiment of gratitude for his escape from drowning. As soon as his cramped limbs permitted, he crawled out of the bushes in search of food. He did not know where he was; there was no sign of habitation—or even occupation—anywhere. He had been too terrified to notice the direction in which he had drifted—even if he had possessed the ordinary knowledge of a backwoodsman, which he did not. He was helpless. In his bewildered state, seeing a squirrel cracking a nut on the branch of a hollow tree near him, he made a half-frenzied dart at the frightened animal, which ran away. But the same association of ideas in his torpid and confused brain impelled him to search for the squirrel's hoard in the hollow of the tree. He ate the few hazel-nuts he found there, ravenously. The purely animal instinct satisfied, he seemed to have borrowed from it a certain animal strength and intuition. He limped through the thicket not unlike some awkward, shy quadrumane, stopping here and there to peer out through the openings over the marshes that lay beyond. His sight,

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hearing, and even the sense of smell had become preternaturally acute. It was the latter which suddenly arrested his steps with the odor of dried fish. It had a significance beyond the mere instincts of hunger—it indicated the contiguity of some Indian encampment. And as such —it meant danger, torture, and death.

He stopped, trembled violently, and tried to collect his scattered senses. Redwood Camp had embroiled itself needlessly and brutally with the surrounding Indians, and only held its own against them by reckless courage and unerring marksmanship. The frequent use of a casual wandering Indian as a target for the practising rifles of its members had kept up an undying hatred in the heart of the aborigines and stimulated them to terrible and isolated reprisals. The scalped and skinned dead body of Jack Trainer, tied on his horse and held hideously upright by a cross of wood behind his saddle, had passed, one night, a slow and ghastly apparition, into camp; the corpse of Dick Ryner had been found anchored on the river-bed, disembowelled and filled with stone and gravel. The solitary and unprotected member of Redwood Camp who fell into the enemy's hands was doomed.

Elijah Martin remembered this, but his fears gradually began to subside in a certain apathy of the imagination, which, perhaps, dulled his apprehensions and allowed the instinct of hunger to become again uppermost. He knew that the low bark tents, or wigwams, of the Indians were hung with strips of dried salmon, and his whole being was now centred upon an attempt to stealthily procure a delicious morsel. As yet he had distinguished no other sign of life or habitation; a few moments later, however, and grown bolder with an animal-like trustfulness in his momentary security, he crept out of the thicket and found himself near a long, low mound or burrow-like structure of mud and bark on the river-bank. A single narrow opening, not unlike the entrance of an Esquimau hut, gave upon the river. Martin had no difficulty in recognizing the character of the building. It was a "sweat-house," an

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institution common to nearly all the aboriginal tribes of California. Half a religious temple, it was also half a sanitary asylum, was used as a Russian bath or superheated vault, from which the braves, sweltering and stifling all night, by smothered fires, at early dawn plunged, perspiring, into the ice-cold river. The heat and smoke were further utilized to dry and cure the long strips of fish hanging from the roof, and it was through the narrow aperture that served as a chimney that the odor escaped which Martin had detected. He knew that, as the bathers only occupied the house from midnight to early morn, it was now probably empty. He advanced confidently toward it.

He was a little surprised to find that the small open space between it and the river was occupied by a rude scaffolding, like that on which certain tribes exposed their dead, but in this instance it only contained the feathered leggings, fringed blanket, and eagle-plumed headdress of some brave. He did not, however, linger in this plainly visible area, but quickly dropped on all-fours and crept into the interior of the house. Here he completed his feast with the fish, and warmed his chilled limbs on the embers of the still smouldering fires. It was while drying his tattered clothes and shoeless feet that he thought of the dead brave's useless leggings and moccasins, and it occurred to him that he would be less likely to attract the Indians' attention from a distance and provoke a ready arrow, if he were disguised as one of them. Crawling out again, he quickly secured, not only the leggings, but the blanket and head-dress, and putting them on, cast his own clothes into the stream. A bolder, more energetic, or more provident man would have followed the act by quickly making his way back to the thicket to reconnoitre, taking with him a supply of fish for future needs. But Elijah Martin succumbed again to the recklessness of inertia; he yielded once more to the animal instinct of momentary security. He returned to the interior of the hut, curled himself again on the ashes, and weakly resolving to sleep until moonrise, and as weakly hesitating, ended by falling into uneasy but helpless stupor.

When he awoke, the rising sun, almost level with the low entrance to the sweat-house, was darting its direct rays into the interior, as if searching it with fiery spears. He had slept ten hours. He rose tremblingly to his knees. Everything was quiet without; he might yet escape. He crawled to the opening. The open space before it was empty, but the scaffolding was gone. The clear, keen air revived him. As he sprang out, erect, a shout that nearly stunned him seemed to rise from the earth on all sides. He glanced around him in a helpless agony of fear. A dozen concentric circles of squatting Indians, whose heads were visible above the reeds, encompassed the banks around the sunken base of the sweat-house with successive dusky rings. Every avenue of escape seemed closed. Perhaps for that reason the attitude of his surrounding captors was passive rather than aggressive, and the shrewd, half-Hebraic profiles nearest him expressed only stoical waiting. There was a strange similarity of expression in his own immovable apathy of despair. His only sense of averting his fate was a confused idea of explaining his intrusion. His desperate memory yielded a few common Indian words. He pointed automatically to himself and the stream. His white lips moved.

"I come—from—the river!"

A guttural cry, as if the whole assembly were clearing their throats, went round the different circles. The nearest rocked themselves to and fro and bent their feathered heads toward him. A hollow-cheeked, decrepit old man arose and said, simply:

"It is he! The great chief has come!"

. . . . . .

He was saved. More than that, he was recreated. For, by signs and intimations he was quickly made aware that since the death of their late chief, their medicine-men had prophesied that his perfect successor should appear miraculously before them, borne noiselessly on the river *from the sea*, in the plumes and insignia of his predecessor. This mere coincidence of appearance and costume might not have been convincing to the braves had not Elijah Martin's actual deficiencies contributed to their

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unquestioned faith in him. Not only his inert possession of the sweat-house and his apathetic attitude in their presence, but his utter and complete unlikeness to the white frontiersmen of their knowledge and tradition—creatures of fire and sword and malevolent activity—as well as his manifest dissimilarity to themselves, settled their conviction of his supernatural origin. His gentle, submissive voice, his yielding will, his lazy helplessness, the absence of strange weapons and fierce explosives in his possession, his unwonted sobriety—all proved him an exception to his apparent race that was in itself miraculous. For it must be confessed that, in spite of the cherished theories of most romances and all statesmen and commanders, that *fear* is the great civilizer of the savage barbarian, and that he is supposed to regard the prowess of the white man and his mysterious death-dealing weapons as evidence of his supernatural origin and superior creation, the facts have generally pointed to the reverse. Elijah Martin was not long in discovering that when the Minyo hunter, with his obsolete bow, dropped dead by a bullet from a viewless and apparently noiseless space, it was *not* considered the lightnings of an avenging Deity, but was traced directly to the ambushed rifle of Kansas Joe, swayed by a viciousness quite as human as their own; the spectacle of Blizzard Dick, verging on *delirium tremens*, and riding "amuck" into an Indian village with a revolver in each hand, did *not* impress them as a supernatural act, nor excite their respectful awe as much as the less harmful frenzy of one of their own medicine-men; they were *not* influenced by implacable white gods, who relaxed only to drive hard bargains and exchange mildewed flour and shoddy blankets for their fish and furs. I am afraid they regarded these raids of Christian civilization as they looked upon grasshopper plagues, famines, inundations, and epidemics; while an utterly impassive God washed his hands of the means he had employed, and even encouraged the faithful to resist and overcome his emissaries—the white devils! Had Elijah Martin been a student of theology, he would have been struck with the singular resemblance of these theories—although the application thereof was reversed—to the Christian faith. But Elijah Martin had neither the imagination of a theologian nor the insight of a politician. He only saw that he, hitherto ignored and despised in a community of half-barbaric men, now translated to a community of men wholly savage, was respected and worshipped!

It might have turned a stronger head than Elijah's. He was at first frightened, fearful lest his reception concealed some hidden irony, or that, like the flower-crowned victim of ancient sacrifice, he was exalted and sustained to give importance and majesty to some impending martyrdom. Then he began to dread that his innocent deceit—if deceit it was—should be discovered; at last, partly from meekness and partly from the animal contentment of present security, he accepted the situation. Fortunately for him it was purely passive. The Great Chief of the Minyo tribe was simply an expressionless idol of flesh and blood. The previous incumbent of that office had been an old man, impotent and senseless of late years through age and disease. The chieftains and braves had consulted in council before him, and perfunctorily submitted their decisions, like offerings, to his unresponsive shrine. In the same way, all material events—expeditions, trophies, industries—were supposed to pass before the dull, impassive eyes of the great chief, for direct acceptance. On the second day of Elijah's accession, two of the braves brought a bleeding human scalp before him. Elijah turned pale, trembled, and averted his head, and then, remembering the danger of giving way to his weakness, grew still more ghastly. The warriors watched him with impassioned faces. A grunt—but whether of astonishment, dissent, or approval, he could not tell—went round the circle. But the scalp was taken away and never again appeared in his presence.

An incident still more alarming quickly followed. Two captives, white men, securely bound, were one day brought before him on their way to the stake, followed by a crowd of old and young squaws and children. The unhappy Elijah recognized in the prisoners two

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"It is he! The Great Chief has come!"

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packers from a distant settlement who sometimes passed through Redwood Camp. An agony of terror, shame, and remorse shook the pseudo chief to his crest of high feathers, and blanched his face beneath its paint and yellow ochre. To interfere to save them from the torture they were evidently to receive at the hands of those squaws and children, according to custom, would be exposure and death to him as well as themselves; while to assist by his passive presence at the horrible sacrifice of his countrymen was too much for even his weak selfishness. Scarcely knowing what he did as the lugubrious procession passed before him, he hurriedly hid his face in his blanket and turned his back upon the scene. There was a dead silence. The warriors were evidently unprepared for this extraordinary conduct of their chief. What might have been their action it was impossible to conjecture, for at that moment a little squaw, perhaps impatient for the sport and partly emboldened by the fact that she had been selected, only a few days before, as the betrothed of the new chief, approached him slyly from the other side. The horrified eyes of Elijah, momentarily raised from his blanket, saw and recognized her. The feebleness of a weak nature, that dared not measure itself directly with the real cause, vented its rage on a secondary object. He darted a quick glance of indignation and hatred at the young girl. She ran back in startled terror to her companions, a hurried consultation followed, and in another moment the whole bevy of girls, old women, and children were on the wing, shrieking and crying, to their wigwams.

"You see," said one of the prisoners coolly to the other, in English, "I was right. They never intended to do anything to us. It was only a bluff. These Minyos are a different sort from the other tribes. They never kill anybody if they can help it."

"You're wrong," said the other, excitedly. "It was that big chief there, with his head in a blanket, that sent those dogs to the right about. Hell! did you see them run at just a look from him? He's a high and mighty feller, you bet. Look at his dignity!"

"That's so—he ain't no slouch," said the other, gazing at Elijah's muffled head, critically. "D——d if he ain't a born king."

The sudden conflict and utter revulsion of emotion that those simple words caused in Elijah's breast was almost incredible. He had been at first astounded by the revelation of the peaceful reputation of the unknown tribe he had been called upon to govern; but even this comforting assurance was as

nothing compared to the greater revelations implied in the speaker's praise of himself. He, Elijah Martin! the despised, the rejected, the worthless outcast of Redwood Camp, recognized as a "born king," a leader; his power felt by the very men who had scorned him! And he had done nothing—stop! had he actually done *nothing?* Was it not possible that he was *really* what they thought him? His brain reeled under

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the strong, unaccustomed wine of praise; acting upon his weak selfishness, it exalted him for a moment to their measure of his strength, even as their former belief in his inefficiency had kept him down. Courage is too often only the memory of past success. This was his first effort; he forgot he had not earned it, even as he now ignored the danger of earning it. The few words of unconscious praise had fallen like the blade of knighthood on his cowering shoulders; he had risen ennobled from the contact. Though his face was still muffled in his blanket, he stood erect and seemed to have gained in stature.

The braves had remained standing irresolute, and yet watchful, a few paces from their captives. Suddenly, Elijah, still keeping his back to the prisoners, turned upon the braves, with blazing eyes, violently throwing out his hands with the gesture of breaking bonds. Like all sudden demonstrations of undemonstrative men, it was extravagant, weird, and theatrical. But it was more potent than speech—the speech that, even if effective, would still have betrayed him to his countrymen. The braves hurriedly cut the thongs of the prisoners; another impulsive gesture from Elijah, and they, too, fled. When he lifted his eyes cautiously from his blanket, captors and captives had dispersed in opposite directions, and he was alone—and triumphant!

From that moment Elijah Martin was another man. He went to bed that night in an intoxicating dream of power; he arose a man of will, of strength. He read it in the eyes of the braves, albeit at times averted in wonder. He understood, now, that although peace had been their habit and custom, they had nevertheless sought to test his theories of administration with the offering of the scalps and the captives, and in this detection of their common weakness he forgot his own. Most heroes require the contrast of the unheroic to set them off; and Elijah actually found himself devising means for strengthening the defensive and offensive character of the tribe, and was himself strengthened by it. Meanwhile the escaped packers did not fail to heighten the importance of their adventure by elevating the character and achievements of their deliverer; and it was presently announced throughout the frontier settlements that the hitherto insignificant and peaceful tribe of Minyos, who inhabited a large territory bordering on the Pacific Ocean, had developed into a powerful nation, only kept from the war-path by a more powerful but mysterious chief. The Government sent an Indian agent to treat with them, in its usual half-paternal, half-aggressive, and wholly inconsistent policy. Elijah, who still retained the imitative sense and adaptability to surroundings which belong to most lazy, impressible natures, and in striped yellow and vermilion features looked the chief he personated, met the agent with silent and becoming gravity. The council was carried on by signs. Never before had an Indian treaty been entered into with such perfect knowledge of the intentions and designs of the whites by the Indians, and such profound ignorance of the qualities of the Indians by the whites. It need scarcely be said that the treaty was an unquestionable Indian success. They did not give up their arable lands; what they did sell to the agent they refused to exchange for extravagant-priced shoddy blankets, worthless guns, damp powder, and mouldy meal. They took pay in dollars, and were thus enabled to open more profitable commerce with the traders at the settlements for better goods and better bargains; they simply declined beads, whiskey, and Bibles at any price. The result was that the traders found it profitable to protect them from their countrymen, and the chances of wantonly shooting down a possible valuable customer stopped the old indiscriminate rifle-practice. The Indians were allowed to cultivate their fields in peace. Elijah purchased for them a few agricultural implements. The catching, curing, and smoking of salmon became an important branch of trade. They waxed prosperous and rich; they lost their nomadic habits—a centralized settlement bearing the external signs of an Indian village took the place of their old temporary encampments, but the huts were internally an improvement on the old wigwams. The dried fish were banished from the tent-poles to long sheds es-

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pecially constructed for that purpose. The sweat-house was no longer utilized for worldly purposes. The wise and mighty Elijah did not attempt to reform their religion, but to preserve it in its integrity.

That these improvements and changes were due to the influence of one man was undoubtedly true, but that he was necessarily a superior man did not follow. Elijah's success was due partly to the fact that he had been enabled to impress certain negative virtues, which were part of his own nature, upon a community equally constituted to receive them. Each was strengthened by the recognition in each other of the unexpected value of those qualities; each acquired a confidence begotten of their success. "*He-hides-his-face*," as Elijah Martin was known to the tribe after the episode of the released captives, was really not so much of an autocrat as many constitutional rulers.

. . . . . .

Two years of tranquil prosperity passed. Elijah Martin, foundling, outcast, without civilized ties or relationship of any kind, forgotten by his countrymen, and lifted into alien power, wealth, security, and respect, became —homesick!

It was near the close of a summer afternoon. He was sitting at the door of his lodge, which overlooked, on one side, the far-shining levels of the Pacific and, on the other, the slow descent to the cultivated meadows and banks of the Minyo River, that debouched through a waste of salt-marsh, beach-grass, sand-dunes, and foamy estuary into the ocean. The headland, or promontory—the only eminence of the Minyo territory—had been reserved by him for his lodge, partly on account of its isolation from the village at its base, and partly for the view it commanded of his territory. Yet his wearying and discontented eyes were more often found on the ocean, as a possible highway of escape from his irksome position, than on the plain and the distant range of mountains, so closely connected with the nearer past and his former detractors. In his vague longing he had no desire to return to them, even in triumph; in his present security there still lingered a doubt of his ability to cope with the old conditions. It was more like his easy, indolent nature—which revived in his prosperity—to trust to this least practical and remote solution of his trouble. His homesickness was as vague as his plan for escape from it; he did not know exactly what he regretted, but it was probably some life he had not enjoyed, some pleasure that had escaped his former incompetency and poverty.

He had sat thus a hundred times, as aimlessly blinking at the vast possibilities of the shining sea beyond, turning his back upon the nearer and more practicable mountains, lulled by the far-off beating of monotonous rollers, the lonely cry of the curlew and plover, the drowsy changes of alternate breaths of cool, fragrant reeds and warm, spicy sands that blew across his eyelids, and succumbed to sleep, as he had done a hundred times before. The narrow strips of colored cloth, insignia of his dignity, flapped lazily from his tent-poles, and at last seemed to slumber with him; the shadows of the leaf-tracery thrown by the bay-tree, on the ground at his feet, scarcely changed its pattern. Nothing moved but the round, restless, berry-like eyes of Wachita, his child-wife, the former heroine of the incident with the captive packers, who sat near her lord, armed with a willow wand, watchful of intruding wasps, sand-flies, and even the more ostentatious advances of a rotund and clerical-looking humble-bee, with his monotonous homily. Content, dumb, submissive, vacant, at such times, Wachita, debarred her husband's confidences through the native customs and his own indifferent taciturnity, satisfied herself by gazing at him with the wondering but ineffectual sympathy of a faithful dog. Unfortunately for Elijah her purely mechanical ministration could not prevent a more dangerous intrusion upon his security.

He awoke with a light start, and eyes that gradually fixed upon the woman a look of returning consciousness. Wachita pointed timidly to the village below.

"The Messenger of the Great White Father has come to-day, with his wagons and horses; he would see the chief of the Minyos, but I would not disturb my lord."

Elijah's brow contracted. Relieved of

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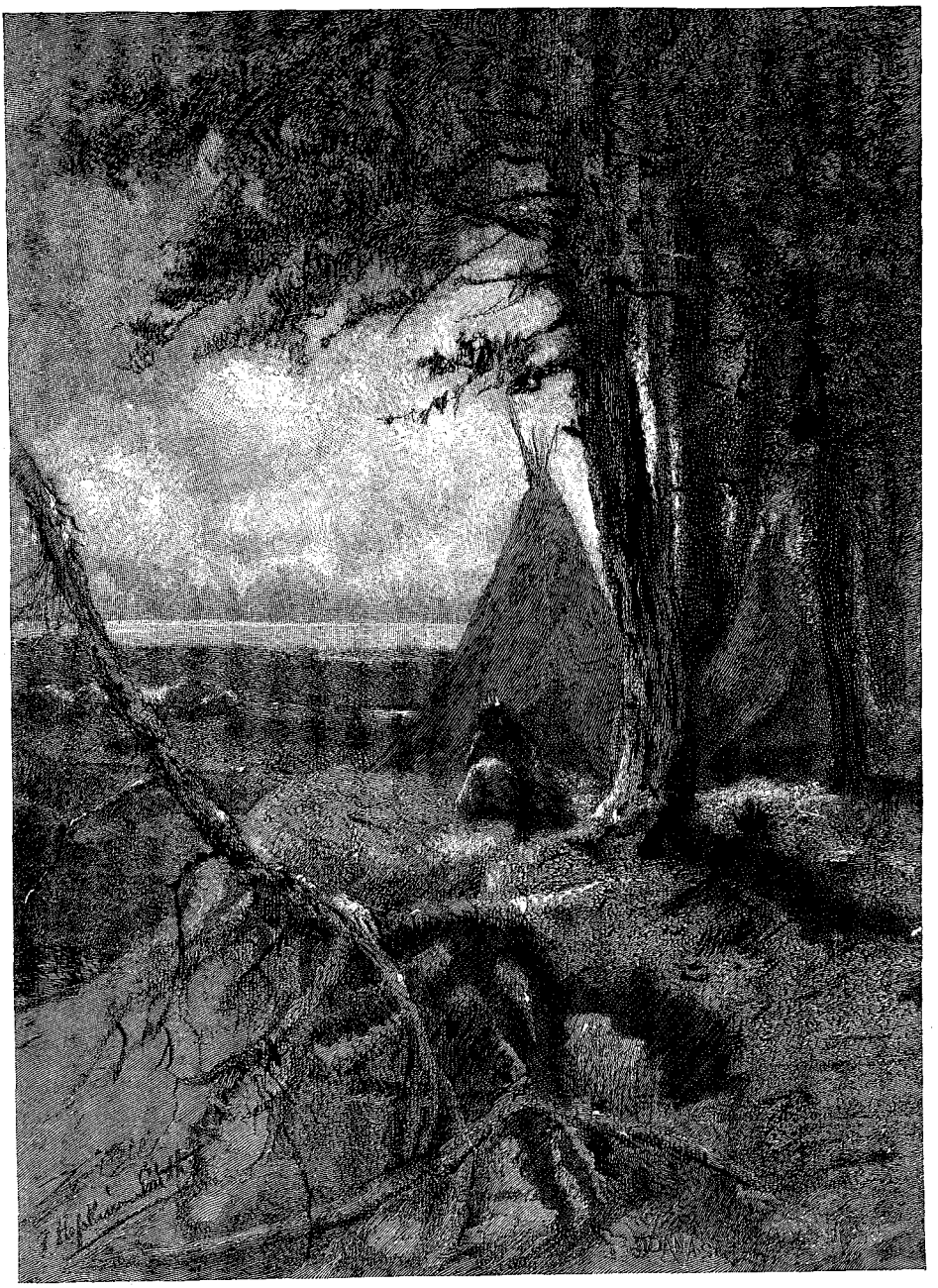

"It was near the close of a summer afternoon."

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its characteristic metaphor, he knew that this meant that the new Indian agent had made his usual official visit, and had exhibited the usual anxiety to see the famous chieftain.

"Good!" he said. "White Rabbit [his lieutenant] will see the Messenger and exchange gifts. It is enough."

"The white messenger has brought his wangee [white] woman with him. They would look upon the face of him who hides it," continued Wachita, dubiously. "They would that Wachita should bring them nearer to where my lord is, that they might see him when he knew it not."

Elijah glanced moodily at his wife, with the half suspicion with which he still regarded her alien character. "Then let Wachita go back to the squaws and old women, and let her hide herself with them until the wangee strangers are gone," he said, curtly. "I have spoken. Go!"

Accustomed to these abrupt dismissals, which did not necessarily indicate displeasure, Wachita disappeared without a word. Elijah, who had risen, remained for a few moments leaning against the tent-poles, gazing abstractedly toward the sea. The bees droned uninterruptedly in his ears, the far-off roll of the breakers came to him distinctly; but suddenly, with greater distinctness, came the murmur of a woman's voice.

"He don't look savage a bit! Why, he's real handsome."

"Hush! you——" said a second voice, in a frightened whisper.

"But if he *did* hear he couldn't understand," returned the first voice. A suppressed giggle followed.

Luckily, Elijah's natural and acquired habits of repression suited the emergency. He did not move, although he felt the quick blood fly to his face, and the voice of the first speaker had suffused him with a strange and delicious anticipation. He restrained himself, though the words she had naively dropped were filling him with new and tremulous suggestion. He was motionless, even while he felt that the vague longing and yearning which had possessed him hitherto was now mysteriously taking some unknown form and action.

The murmuring ceased. The humble-bee's drone again became ascendant—a sudden fear seized him. She was *going;* he should never see her! While he had stood there a dolt and sluggard, she had satisfied her curiosity and stolen away. With a sudden yielding to impulse, he darted quickly in the direction where he had heard her voice. The thicket moved, parted, crackled, and rustled, and then undulated thirty feet before him in a long wave, as if from the passage of some lithe, invisible figure. But at the same moment a little cry, half of alarm, half of laughter, broke from his very feet, and a bent manzanito-bush, relaxed by frightened fingers, flew back against his breast. Thrusting it hurriedly aside, his stooping, eager face came almost in contact with the pink, flushed cheeks and tangled curls of a woman's head. He was so near, her moist and laughing eyes almost drowned his eager glance; her parted lips and white teeth were so close to his that her quick breath took away his own.

She had dropped on one knee, as her companion fled, expecting he would overlook her as he passed, but his direct onset had extracted the feminine outcry. Yet even then she did not seem greatly frightened.

"It's only a joke, sir," she said, coolly lifting herself to her feet by grasping his arm. "I'm Mrs. Dall, the Indian agent's wife. They said you wouldn't let anybody see you—and *I* determined I would. That's all!" She stopped, threw back her tangled curls behind her ears, shook the briers and thorns from her skirt, and added: "Well, I reckon you aren't afraid of a woman, are you? So no harm's done. Good-by!"

She drew slightly back as if to retreat, but the elasticity of the manzanito against which she was leaning threw her forward once more. He again inhaled the perfume of her hair; he saw even the tiny freckles that darkened her upper lip and brought out the moist, red curve below. A sudden recollection of a playmate of his vagabond childhood flashed across his mind; a wild inspiration of lawlessness, begotten of his past experience, his solitude, his dictatorial power, and the beauty of the woman before him, mounted to his brain. He threw his arms passionately around her, pressed

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his lips to hers, and with a half-hysterical laugh drew back and disappeared in the thicket.

Mrs. Dall remained for an instant dazed and stupefied. Then she lifted her arm mechanically, and with her sleeve wiped her bruised mouth and the ochre-

stain that his paint had left, like blood, upon her cheek. Her laughing face had become instantly grave, but not from fear; her dark eyes had clouded, but not entirely with indignation. She suddenly brought down her hand sharply against her side with a gesture of discovery. "That's no Injun!" she said, with prompt decision. The next minute she plunged back into the trail again, and the dense foliage once more closed around her. But as she did so the broad, vacant face and the mutely wondering eyes of Wachita rose, like a placid moon, between the branches of a tree where they had been hidden, and shone serenely and impassively after her.

. . . . . .

A month elapsed. But it was a month filled with more experience to Elijah than his past two years of exaltation. In the first few days following his meeting with Mrs. Dall, he was possessed by terror, mingled with flashes of desperation, at the remembrance of his rash imprudence. His recollection of extravagant frontier chivalry to womankind, and the swift retribution of the insulted husband or guardian, alternately filled him with abject fear or extravagant recklessness. At times prepared for flight, even to the desperate abandonment of himself in a canoe to the waters of the Pacific; at times he was on the point of inciting his braves to attack the Indian agency and precipitate the war that he felt would be inevitable. As the days passed, and there seemed to be no interruption to his friendly relations with the agency, with that relief a new, subtle joy crept into Elijah's heart. The image of the agent's wife framed in the leafy screen behind his lodge, the perfume of her hair and breath mingled with the spicing of the bay, the brief thrill and tantalization of the stolen kiss still haunted him. Through his long, shy abstention from society, and his two years of solitary exile, the fresh beauty of this young Western wife, in whom the frank artlessness of girlhood still lingered, appeared to him like a superior creation. He forgot his vague longings in the inception of a more tangible but equally unpractical passion. He remembered her unconscious and spontaneous admiration of him; he dared to connect it with her forgiving silence. If she had with-

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held her confidences from her husband, he could hope—he knew not exactly what!

One afternoon Wachita put into his hand a folded note. With an instinctive presentiment of its contents, Elijah turned red and embarrassed in receiving it from the woman who was recognized as his wife. But the impassive, submissive manner of this household drudge, instead of touching his conscience, seemed to him a vulgar and brutal acceptance of the situation that dulled whatever compunction he might have had. He opened the note and read hurriedly as follows:

"You took a great freedom with me the other day, and I am justified in taking one with you now. I believe you understand English as well as I do. If you want to explain that, and your conduct to me, I will be at the same place this afternoon. My friend will accompany me, but she need not hear what you have to say."

Elijah read the letter, which might have been written by an ordinary schoolgirl, as if it had conveyed the veiled rendezvous of a princess. The reserve, caution, and shyness which had been the safeguard of his weak nature were swamped in a flow of immature passion. He flew to the interview with the eagerness and inexperience of first love. He was completely at her mercy. So utterly was he subjugated by her presence that she did not even run the risk of his passion. Whatever sentiment might have mingled with her curiosity, she was never conscious of a necessity to guard herself against it. At this second meeting she was in full possession of his secret. He had told her everything; she had promised nothing in return—she had not even accepted anything. Even her actual after-relations to the denouement of his passion are still shrouded in mystery.

Nevertheless, Elijah lived two weeks on the unsubstantial memory of this meeting. What might have followed could not be known, for at the end of that time an outrage—so atrocious that even the peaceful Minyos were thrilled with savage indignation—was committed on the outskirts of the village. An old chief, who had been specially selected to deal with the Indian agent, and who kept a small trading outpost, had been killed and his goods despoiled by a reckless Redwood packer. The murderer had coolly said that he was only "serving out" the tool of a fraudulent imposture on the Government, and that he dared the arch-impostor himself, the so-called Minyo chief, to help himself. A wave of ungovernable fury surged up to the very tent-poles of Elijah's lodge and demanded vengeance. Elijah trembled and hesitated. In the thraldom of his selfish passion for Mrs. Dall he dared not contemplate a collision with her countrymen. He would have again sought refuge in his passive, non-committal attitude, but he knew the impersonal character of Indian retribution and compensation—a sacrifice of equal value, without reference to the culpability of the victim—and he dreaded some spontaneous outbreak. To prevent the enforced expiation of the crime by some innocent brother packer, he was obliged to give orders for the pursuit and arrest of the criminal, secretly hoping for his escape or the interposition of some circumstance to avert his punishment. A day of sullen expectancy to the old men and squaws in camp, of gloomy anxiety to Elijah alone in his lodge, followed the departure of the braves on the war-path. It was midnight when they returned. Elijah, who from his habitual reserve and the accepted etiquette of his exalted station had remained impassive in his tent, only knew from the guttural rejoicings of the squaws that the expedition had been successful and the captive was in their hands. At any other time he might have thought it an evidence of some growing scepticism of his infallibility of judgment and a diminution of respect that they did not confront him with their prisoner. But he was too glad to escape from the danger of exposure and possible arraignment of his past life by the desperate captive, even though it might not have been understood by the spectators. He reflected that the omission might have arisen from their recollection of his previous aversion to a retaliation on other prisoners. Enough that they would wait his signal for the torture and execution at sunrise the next day.

The night passed slowly. It is more than probable that the selfish and igno-

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ble torments of the sleepless and vacillating judge were greater than those of the prisoner who dozed at the stake between his curses. Yet it was part of Elijah's fatal weakness that his kinder and more human instincts were dominated even at that moment by his lawless

passion for the Indian agent's wife, and his indecision as to the fate of his captive was as much due to this preoccupation as to a selfish consideration of her relations to the result. He hated the prisoner for his infelicitous and untimely crime, yet he could not make up his mind to his death. He paced the ground before his lodge in dishonorable incertitude. The small eyes of the submissive Wachita watched him with vague solicitude.

Toward morning he was struck by a shameful inspiration. He would creep unperceived to the victim's side, unloose his bonds, and bid him fly to the Indian agency. There he was to inform Mrs. Dall that her husband's safety depended upon his absenting himself for a few days, but that she was to remain and communicate with Elijah. She would understand everything, perhaps; at least she would know that the prisoner's release was to please her, but even if she did not, no harm would be done, a white man's life would be saved, and his real motive would not be suspected. He turned with feverish eagerness to the lodge. Wachita had disappeared—probably to join the other women. It was well; she would not suspect him.

The tree to which the doomed man was bound was, by custom, selected nearest the chief's lodge, within its sacred enclosure, with no other protection than that offered by its reserved seclusion and the outer semicircle of warriors' tents before it. To escape, the captive would therefore have to pass beside the chief's lodge to the rear and descend the hill toward the shore. Elijah would show him the way, and make it appear as if he had escaped unaided. As he glided into the shadow of a group of

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pines, he could dimly discern the outline of the destined victim, secured against one of the larger trees in a sitting posture, with his head fallen forward on his breast as if in sleep. But at the same moment another figure glided out from the shadow and approached the fatal tree. It was Wachita!

He stopped in amazement. But in another instant a flash of intelligence made it clear. He remembered her vague uneasiness and solicitude at his agitation, her sudden disappearance; she had fathomed his perplexity, as she had once before. Of her own accord she was going to release the prisoner! The knife to cut his cords glittered in her hand. Brave and faithful animal!

He held his breath as he drew nearer. But, to his horror, the knife suddenly flashed in the air and darted down, again and again, upon the body of the helpless man. There was a convulsive struggle, but no outcry, and the next moment the body hung limp and inert in its cords. Elijah would himself have fallen, half-fainting, against a tree, but, by a revulsion of feeling, came the quick revelation that the desperate girl had rightly solved the problem! She had done what he ought to have done—and his loyalty and manhood were preserved. That conviction and the courage to act upon it—to have called the sleeping braves to witness his sacrifice—would have saved him, but it was ordered otherwise.

As the girl rapidly passed him he threw out his hand and seized her wrist. "Who did you do this for?" he demanded.

"For you," she said, stupidly.

"And why?"

"Because you no kill him—you love his squaw."

"*His* squaw!" He staggered back. A terrible suspicion flashed upon him. He dashed Wachita aside and ran to the tree. It was the body of the Indian agent! Aboriginal justice had been satisfied. The warriors had not caught the *murderer*, but, true to their idea of vicarious retribution, had determined upon the expiatory sacrifice of a life as valuable and innocent as the one they had lost.

. . . . . .

"So the Gov'rment hev at last woke up and wiped out them cussed Digger Minyos," said Snap-shot Harry, as he laid down the newspaper, in the brand-new saloon of the brand-new town of Redwood. "I see they've stampeded both banks of the Minyo River, and sent off a lot to the reservation. I reckon the soldiers at Fort Cass got sick o' sentiment after those hounds killed the Injun agent, and are beginning to agree with us that the only 'good Injun' is a dead one."

"And it turns out that that wonderful chief, that them two packers used to rave about, woz about as big a devil ez any, and tried to run off with the agent's wife, only the warriors killed her. I'd like to know what become of him. Some says he was killed, others allow that he got away. I've heerd tell that he was originally some kind of Methodist preacher!—a kind o' saint that got a sort o' spiritooal holt on the old squaws and children."

"Why don't you ask old Skeesicks? I see he's back here ag'in—and grubbin' along at a dollar a day on tailin's. He's been somewhere up north, they say."

"What, Skeesicks? that shiftless, o'n'ry cuss! You bet he wusn't anywhere where there was danger or fighting. Why, you might as well hev suspected *him* of being the big chief himself! There he comes—ask him."

And the laughter was so general that Elijah Martin—alias Skeesicks—lounging shyly into the bar-room, joined in it weakly.

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TARPEIA.

By Louise Imogen Guiney.

Woe: lightly to part with one's soul as the sea with its foam!
Woe to Tarpeia, Tarpeia, daughter of Rome!

Lo, now it was night, with the moon looking chill as she went;
It was morn when the innocent stranger strayed into the tent.

The hostile Sabini were pleased, as one meshing a bird;
She sang for them there in the ambush: they smiled as they heard.

Her sombre hair purpled in gleams as she leaned to the light;
All day she had idled and feasted, and now it was night.

The chief sat apart, heavy-browed, brooding, elbow on knee;
The armlets he wore were thrice royal, and wondrous to see—

Exquisite artifice, whorls of barbaric design,
Frost's fixed mimicry, orbic imaginings fine

In sevenfold coils: and in orient glimmer from them,
The variform, voluble swinging of gem upon gem.

And the glory thereof sent fever and fire to her eye:
"I had never such trinkets!" she sighed—like a lute was her sigh;

"Were they mine at the plea, were they mine for the token, all told,
Now the citadel sleeps, now my father the keeper is old,

"If I go by the way that I know, and thou followest hard,
If yet by the touch of Tarpeia the gates be unbarred?"

The chief trembled sharply for joy, then drew rein on his soul:
"Of all this arm beareth, I swear I will cede thee the whole."

And up from the nooks of the camp, with hoarse plaudit outdealt,
The bearded Sabini glanced hotly, and vowed, as they knelt,

Bare-stretching the wrists that bore also the glowing great boon:
"Yea! surely as over us shineth the lurid low moon,

"Not alone of our lord, but of each of us take what he hath!
Too poor is the guerdon, if thou wilt but show us the path."

Her nostrils upraised, like a fawn's on the arrowy air,
She sped. In a serpentine gleam, to the precipice stair,

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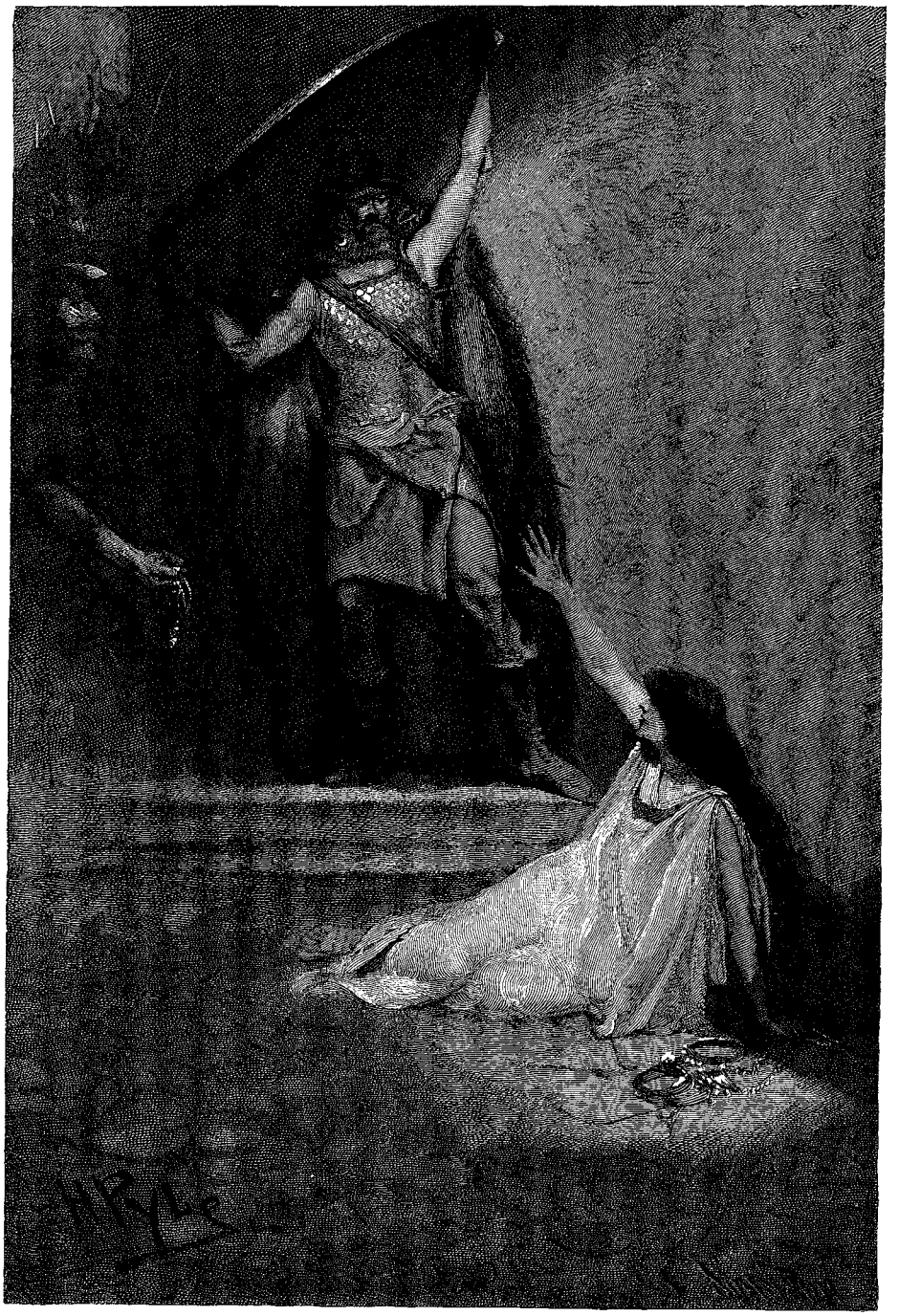

"Then faced her the leonine chief."

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They climbed in her traces, they closed on their evil swift star:
She bent to the latches, and swung the huge portal ajar.

Repulsed where they passed her, half-tearful for wounded belief,
"The bracelets!" she pleaded. Then faced her the leonine chief,

And answered her: "Even as I promised, maid-merchant! I do.'
Down from his dark shoulder the bawbles he sullenly drew.

"This left arm shall nothing begrudge thee. Accept. Find it sweet!
Give, too, O my brothers!" The jewels he flung at her feet.

The jewels hard, heavy; she stooped to them, flushing with dread,
But the shield he flung after: it clanged on her beautiful head.

Like the Apennine bells when the villagers' warnings begin,
Athwart the first lull broke the ominous din upon din:

With a "Hail, benefactress!" upon her they heaped, in their zeal,
Death: agate and iron; death: chrysoprase, beryl, and steel.

'Neath the outcry of scorn, 'neath the sinewy tension and hurl,
The moaning died slowly, and still they massed over the girl

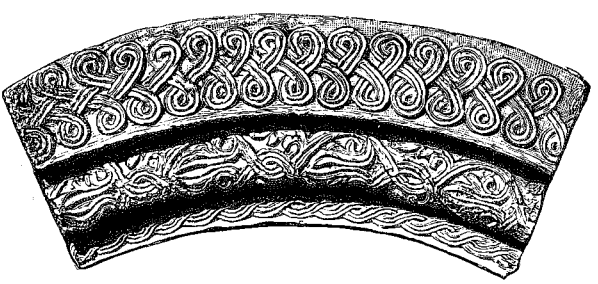
A mountain of shields! and the gemmy bright tangle in links,
A torrent-like gush, pouring out on the grass from the chinks.

Pyramidal gold! the sumptuous monument won
By the deed they had loved her for, doing, and loathed her for, done.

Such was the wage that they paid her, such the acclaim:
All Rome was aroused with the thunder that buried her shame.

On surged the Sabini to battle. O you that aspire!
Tarpeia the traitor had fill of her woman's desire.

Woe: lightly to part with one's soul as the sea with its foam!
Woe to Tarpeia, Tarpeia, daughter of Rome!



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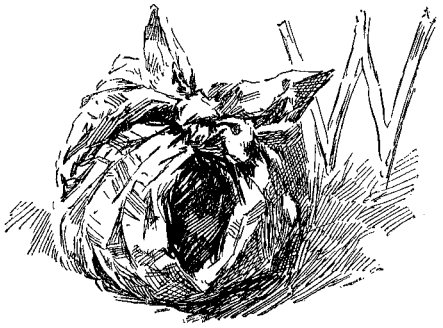
THE ZADOC PINE LABOR UNION.

By H. C. Bunner.



WHEN Zadoc Pine's father died, Zadoc found himself alone in the North Woods, three miles from Silsbee's Station, twenty-one years old, six foot one inch high, in perfect health, with a good appetite. He had been to school one summer; he could read and write fairly well, and could cipher very well. He had gone through the history of the United States, and he had a hazy idea of geography. When his father's estate was settled up, and all debts paid, Zadoc owned two silver dollars, the clothes he stood in, one extra flannel shirt, done up in a bandanna handkerchief in company with a razor, a comb, a tooth-brush, and two collars. Besides these things he had a six-inch clasp-knife and an old-fashioned muzzle-loading, percussion-cap rifle.

Old man Pine had been a good Adirondack guide in his time; but for the last six years he had been laid up, a helpless cripple, with inflammatory rheumatism. He and his son—old Pine's wife had died before the boy was ten years old—lived in their little house in the woods. The father had some small savings, and the son could earn a little as a sort of auxiliary guide. He got a job here and there where some party needed an extra man. Zadoc was an excellent shot; but he was no fisherman, and he had little knowledge of the streams and ponds further in the woods.

So, when the old father was gone, when Zadoc had paid the last cent of his debt to the storekeeper at Silsbee's—the storekeeper taking the almost worthless shanty of the Pines in part payment—when he had settled with Silsbee's sawmill for the boards out of which he himself had made his father's coffin, Zadoc Pine stood on the station-platform and wondered what was going to become of him, or, rather, as he put it, "what he was a-going for to do with himself."

There was no employment for him at Silsbee's Station. He might, perhaps, get a job as guide; but it was doubtful, and he had seen too much of the life. It seemed to him a waste of energy. To live as his father had lived, a life of toil and exposure, a dreary existence of hard work and small profit, and to end at last penniless and in debt for food, was no part of Zadoc's plans. He knew from the maps in the old geography that the whole Adirondack region was only a tiny patch on the map of the United States. Somewhere outside there he was sure he would find a place for himself.

He knew that the little northern railroad at his feet connected with the greater roads to the south. But the great towns of the State were only so many names to him. His eyes were not turned toward New York. He had "guided" for parties of New York men, and he had learned enough to make himself sure that New York was too large for him. "I wouldn't be no more good down there," he said to himself, "then they be up here. 'Tain't my size."

Yet somewhere he must go. He had watched the young men who employed him, and he had made up his mind to two things: First, these young men had money; second, he could get it if they could. One had jokingly shown him a hundred-dollar bill, and had asked him to change it. There was some part of the world, then, where people could be free-and-easy with hundred-dollar bills. Why was not that the place for him? "They know a lot more'n I do," he said;

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"but they hed to l'arn it furst-off; an' I guess ef their brains was so everlastin' much better'n mine they wouldn't souse 'em with whiskey the way they do."

As Zadoc Pine stood on the platform, feeling of the two silver dollars in his pocket, he saw the wagon drive up from Silsbee's saw-mill with a load of timber, and old Mr. Silsbee on top of the load. There was a train of flat cars on the siding, where it had been lying for an hour, waiting for the up-train. When the wagon arrived, Mr. Silsbee, the station-master, and the engineer of the train had a three-cornered colloquy of a noisy sort. The station-master after awhile withdrew, shrugging his shoulders with the air of a man who declines to engage further in a profitless discussion.

"What's the matter?" asked Zadoc.

"That there lumber of Silsbee's," said the station-master, who was a New England man. "The durned old cantankerous cuss is kickin' because he can't ship it. Why, this here train's so short o' hands they can't hardly run it ez 'tis, let alone loadin' lumber."

"Where's it goin' to?" inquired Zadoc, "an' why's this train short o' hands?"

"Goin' to South Ridge, Noo Jersey," said the station-master, "or 'twould be ef 'twan't for this blame strike. Can't get nobody to load it."

"Where's South Ridge?" was Zadoc's next inquiry.

"'Bout ten or twenty miles from Noo York."

"Country?"

"Country 'nough, I guess. Ask Silsbee."

Zadoc walked after Mr. Silsbee, who was by this time marching back toward the saw-mill, red in the face and puffing hard. Zadoc got in front of him.

"Mornin', Mr. Silsbee," he said.

"Mornin'—er—who are ye? Oh, Enoch Pine's boy, hey? Mornin', young man—I hain't got no time——"

"How much is it wuth to you to get them sticks to where they're goin' to?" demanded Zadoc.

"Wuth? It's wuth hundreds of dollars to me, young man—it's wuth——"

"Is it wuth a five-dollar bill?" Zadoc interrupted.

"Whatyermean?"

"You know me, Squire Silsbee. If it's wuth a five-dollar bill to get them timbers down to South Ridge, New Jersey, an' you can get that engineer to take me on as an extry hand that far, I'll load 'em on, go down there with 'em, and unload 'em. All I want's five dollars for my keep while I'm a-goin'."

"You don't want t'go to South Ridge?" gasped Mr. Silsbee.

"Yaas, I do."

"Whut fer?"

"Fer my health," said Zadoc. The squire looked at the muscular, sunburnt animal before him, and he had to grin.

"Well," he said, "'tain't none o' *my* business. You come along, an' I'll see if that pig-headed fool will let you work your way down."

One hour later Zadoc was rolling southward on a flat car, and learning how to work brakes as he went. It was a wonderful pleasure-trip to him. The work was nothing; he was strong as a bull-moose; and he was simply enchanted to see the great world stringing itself out along the line of the railroad-track. He had never in his life seen a settlement larger than Silsbee's, and when the villages turned into towns and the towns into cities, he was so much interested that he lost his appetite. He asked the train-hands all the questions he could think of, and acquired some information, although they did not care to talk about much except the great strike and the probable action of the unions.

. . . . . .

It was about six o'clock of a cloudy May evening when Zadoc Pine jumped off the car at South Ridge and helped to unload Mr. Silsbee's cargo of timber. The brakeman on his end of the train said, "So long!" Zadoc said, "So long!" and the train whirled on to New York.

Zadoc stood by the track and gazed somewhat dismally after his travelling home. He was roused from something like a brown study when the station-master of South Ridge hailed him.

"Hi, country! where are you?"

"Is this New Jersey?" asked Zadoc.

"Yes. What did you think it was—Ohio?"

Zadoc had heard something of the

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national reputation of the State from his late companions.

"Well," he reflected, "I must be pretty mildewed when a Jerseyman hollers 'country' at me."

Zadoc made this reflection aloud. The station-master walked off with a growl, and two or three gentlemen, who were talking on the platform, laughed quietly. Zadoc walked up to one of them.

"I brung that there lumber down here," he said; "I'd like to know who owns it. Maybe there's more job in it fer me?"

"I don't think so," one of the gentlemen said, in a rather cold and distant way. "That is for the new station, and the railway company has its own hands."

Zadoc looked all about him. There was no town to be seen. He was among the foot-hills of the Orange Mountains, and on all sides of him were undulating slopes, some open, some wooded. He saw old-fashioned farm-houses, and many more modern dwellings, of what seemed to him great size and beauty, although they were only ordinary suburban cottages of the better sort. But nowhere could he see shops or factories. There was a quarry high up on one of the slopes, but that was all. It looked like a poor place in which to seek for work.

"Well," he remarked, "maybe there's somewheres where I can put up fer to-night."

"What sort of place?" the gentleman asked.

"Well," said Zadoc, "some sort of inn, or tavern, or suthin', where I c'n get about ten cents' wuth o' style an' ninety cents' wuth o' sleep an' feed."

Two of the gentlemen laughed; but the one to whom Zadoc had spoken, who seemed a dignified and haughty person, answered, in a chilly and discouraging way:

"Go down this street to the cross-roads, and ask for Bryan's. That is where the quarrymen board."

He turned away, and went in the other direction with his companions. Zadoc Pine shouldered his rifle, picked up the handkerchief which held his other belongings, and trudged down the road under the new foliage of the great chestnuts. He came in a little while to the cross-roads, where there were four huddled blocks of shabby square houses. There was a butcher's shop, a grocer's, a baker's, three or four drinking-places, and Bryan's. This was the forlornest house of all. There was a dirty attempt at an ice-cream saloon in the front, and in the rear was a large room with a long table, where the quarrymen took their meals. When Zadoc arrived, the quarrymen were sitting on the sidewalk in front of the house, with their feet in the gutter. They were smoking pipes and talking in a dull way among themselves. By the time that Zadoc had bargained for a room, with supper and breakfast, for one dollar, supper was announced, and they all came in. Zadoc did not like either his companions or his supper.

He did not know enough of the distinguishing marks of various nationalities to guess at the nativity of these men; but he knew that they were not Americans. He tried to talk to the man nearest him, but the man did not want to talk. Zadoc asked him about the work and the wages at the quarry.

"It's a dollar-twinty-five a day," the quarryman said, sullenly; "an' it's a shame! The union ain't doin' nothin' fer us. An' there ain't no more quarrymen wanted. There's Milliken, he owns the carrts; mebbe he'll take a driver. But if ye want a job ye'll have to see McCuskey, the diligate."

"What might a diligate be?" inquired the young man from the North Woods.

"The mon what runs the union. Ye're a union mon, ain't ye?"

"Guess not," said Zadoc.

"Thin ye'd best be out of this," the man said, rising rudely and lumbering off.

"Guess I won't wake McCuskey up in the mornin'," Zadoc thought; "dollar-'n'-a-quarter's big money; but I don't want no sech work ez quarryin', ef it makes a dead log of a man like that."

He finished his meal and went into the street. Bryan was leaning against the door-jamb, conversing with a tall man on the sidewalk. It was the gentleman whom Zadoc had seen at the station.

"You can't get him this week, Mr.

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Thorndyke," said Bryan. "Bixby's ahead of you, and the Baxters. They been waitin' three weeks for him. Fact is, Andy don't want to do no more th'n two days' work in a week."

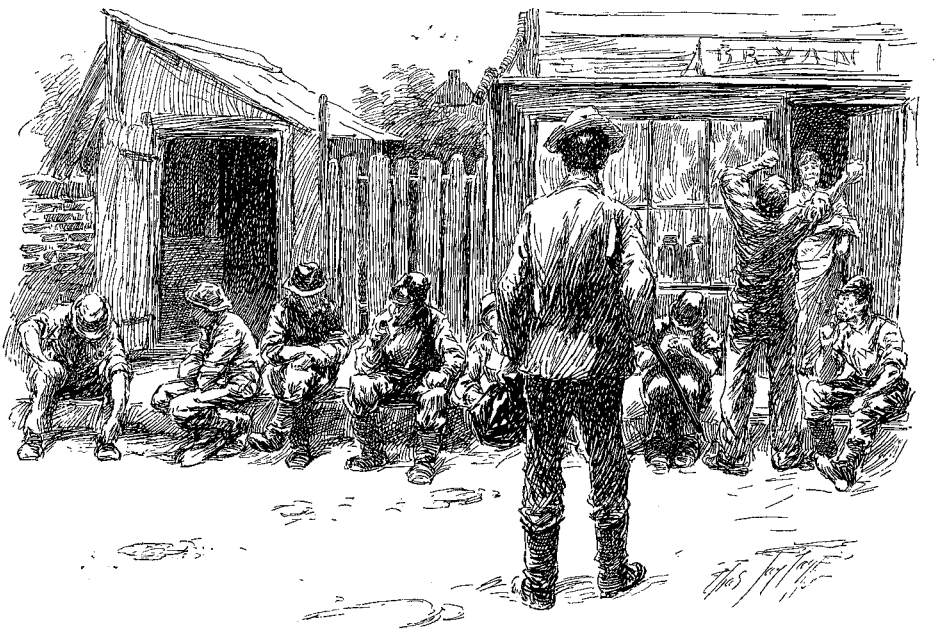
"Can't you think of any other man?"

"*Can* you dig them?" Mr. Thorndyke looked surprised and suspicious.

"That's what I'm here fer."

"Do you know where my house is? The third on the hill?"

"Third she is," said Zadoc.



Mr. Thorndyke queried, irritably. "Here I have been waiting for this fellow a whole fortnight to dig a half-dozen beds in my garden, and I don't believe he intends to come. There ought to be somebody who wants the job. Can't some of these men here come after hours, or before, and do it? I pay well enough for the work."

There was no movement among the quarrymen, who were once more sitting on the edge of the sidewalk, with their feet in the gutter.

"I don't know of no one, Mr. Thorndyke," said Bryan, and Mr. Thorndyke turned back up the road.

"Diggin' garden-beds?" mused Zadoc. "I ain't never dug no garden-beds; but I hev dug fer bait, 'n' I guess the principle's the same—on'y you don't hev to sort out the wums." He walked rapidly after Mr. Thorndyke, and overtook him.

"Don't you want me to dig them beds fer you?" he inquired.

"Come up to-morrow morning."

Zadoc went back to Bryan's and went to bed in a narrow, close room, overlooking an ill-kept back yard. It was dirty, it was cheerless; worst of all, it was airless. Zadoc's mind was made up. "Ef this suits quarrymen, quarryin' don't suit me."

. . . . . .

He had a bad night, and arose at five the next morning. At six he went to a breakfast that was worse than the supper had been. Zadoc had been used to poor and coarse fare all his life, but there was something about this flabby, flavorless, greasy, boarding-house food that went against him. He ate what he could, and then walked up the road toward Mr. Thorndyke's house. As he went higher up the hill he saw that the houses at the cross-roads were very much unlike their surroundings. To a man born and brought up in the skirts of the North Woods, this New Jersey village seemed

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a very paradise. The green lawns amazed him; the neat fences, the broad roads, the great trees, standing clear of underbrush, were all marvels, in his eyes. And besides the comfortable farm-houses and the mansions of the rich and great, he saw many humbler dwellings of a neat and well-ordered sort. From one of these a pretty girl, standing in the doorway, with her right arm in a sling, looked at him with curiosity, and what Zadoc took to be kindly interest. It was really admiration. If Zadoc had ever thought to inquire, he would have learned that he was not only big, but good-looking.

He lingered a little as he passed this place, to admire it. The house had two stories, of which the lower was of rough stone, brightly whitewashed. In front was a bit of a garden, in which green things were sprouting. In the little woodshed, to one side, a neat old woman, with pretty, white hair, was cutting kindling-wood. The girl in the doorway was very pretty, if her arm *was* in a sling. Zadoc looked it all over with entire approval. "That's *my* size," he thought.

He found no one awake at Mr. Thorndyke's house, and he sat on the front steps until half-past seven o'clock, when Mr. Thorndyke himself came out to get the morning paper, which had been left on the front porch. Zadoc had read it through already.

"You are early," was Mr. Thorndyke's greeting.

"I was earlier when I come," returned Zadoc. "Been here more'n an hour. Awful waste o' God's sunlight, when there's work a-waitin'."

"Well," said Mr. Thorndyke, coldly, as he led the way around the corner of the house, "here are the beds. The lines are pegged out. I suppose there is about a day's work on them, and I will pay you at the usual rate for gardeners' work, hereabouts—a dollar and a half."

"Yaas," said Zadoc, as he looked over the territory staked out, "I see. But if this job's wuth a dollar-'n'-a-half to you, I'd ruther take it *ez* a job, at them figgers. I *can* fool away a day on it, ef that'll please you better; but I'd ruther git through with it when I get through, ef it's all the same to you."

"I don't care how you do it," Mr. Thorndyke said, "so long as it is done, and done properly, when I come home to-night at six."

"You needn't put off coming home fer me," was Zadoc's cheerful assurance.

Then he proceeded to ask Mr. Thorndyke a number of questions about the manner in which the beds were to be dug. Mr. Thorndyke knit his brows.

"Haven't you ever dug beds before?"

"I never dug no beds fer *you*. When I do work fer a man I do it to suit him, an' not to suit some other feller."

"How do I know that you can do the work at all?"

"You don't," said Zadoc, frankly; "but ef 'tain't satisfactory you don't hev to pay. *Thet's* cheap fer a hole in the ground."

"Have you a spade?" Mr. Thorndyke demanded, and his manner was depressingly stern.

"No, I ain't," said Zadoc, "but I'll git one."

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Zadoc walked up to the next house on the hill, which was a large and imposing structure. It belonged to the richest man in South Ridge, and the richest man was sitting on his front porch.

"Got a spade to lend?" Zadoc asked.

"What do you want it for?" the richest man demanded.

"Fer a job down there to Squire Thorndyke's, next door," Zadoc informed him.

"Did Mr. Thorndyke send you?"

"No, I come myself."

The millionnaire of South Ridge stared at Zadoc for a moment, and then arose, walked around the house, and presently reappeared with a spade. "When you bring this back," he said, "give it to the man in the stable."

"Much obliged!" said Zadoc.

The beds were all dug before three o'clock, and Mrs. Thorndyke came out and expressed her approval. Zadoc took off his hat and bowed, as his father had told him he should do when he met a lady.

"I see," he remarked, "you've got some mornin'-glories set out alongside o' the house. Ef you'll get me a ladder an' some string, an' nails an' a hammer, I'll train 'em up fer yer."

Mrs. Thorndyke looked doubtful.

"I don't know what arrangement my husband has made with you," she began; but Zadoc interrupted her.

"There ain't nothin' to pay fer that, ma'am. One pertater on top'f the measure don't break no one, and it kinder holds trade."

The ladder and the other things were brought out, and Zadoc climbed up and fastened the strings as he had seen them arranged for the morning-glories that climbed up the walls of Squire Silsbee's house.

While he was on the ladder, the rich man next door, whose name, by the way, was Vredenburg, came down and leaned

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on the fence and talked to Mrs. Thorndyke.

"Getting the place in good trim, aren't you?"

"Trying to," said Mrs. Thorndyke. "There are ever so many things to do. I've sent to three men already, to cart my ash-heap away, and they won't come. There's a wandering gardener here who has just dug my beds; if it hadn't been for him, I should have gone without flowers all the summer."

Zadoc heard this and grinned; and then he began to think. He had been looking over toward the quarry during the day, and he had noticed that the horses stood idle a large part of the time; there was one tall gray hitched to a cart, whose business it was to remove the small stones and waste, and who did not make one trip an hour, resting for the greater part of the time under a huge tree.

"That horse ain't too tired," thought Zadoc, "to give a feller a lift after workin' hours."

By four o'clock the strings were up for the morning-glories. Mr. Thorndyke would not return before six. Zadoc strolled down to the quarry and found Milliken. He asked Milliken what would be a proper charge for the services of the big gray horse for two hours after six o'clock. Milliken thought fifty cents would pay him and the horse. Then Zadoc continued his stroll, and found out that the dumping-grounds of South Ridge were near the river, among the tailings of an abandoned quarry.

After that he went back to Bryan's and got a couple of eggs cooked for his private supper. He had had his dinner at the noon hour, and it was worse than the breakfast. The eggs were, as he told Mr. Bryan, "kinder 'twixt grass and hay." He felt that he had had enough of Bryan's.

Going up the road to Mr. Thorndyke's, he came to the neat little house that he had noticed the night before; he looked at it for a minute, and then he went in and asked the white-haired old woman if she did not want to take him as a boarder. She said that she did not; she was a lone widow-woman, and she had all she could do to pay her way with doing washing, and she didn't want no quarrymen fooling around her house; she knew what quarrymen were.

Zadoc explained to her that he was not a quarryman. He told her all about himself, and about his dissatisfaction with Bryan's arrangements; but she only shook her head and said that she didn't want him. He was going out of the door, when the young girl who had smiled on him yesterday, and who had been listening in a corner, came forward and spoke earnestly to the old woman.

"He *looks* good, mother," Zadoc heard her say; "and it's to his credit that he don't like Bryan's. If he's a decent man, we oughtn't to send him back to a place like that. It's a shame for a young man to be left among those people."

The old woman wavered. "We might try him," she said.

Zadoc came back.

"You try me, and you'll keep me," said he. "An' as fer you, young woman, ef you use as much judgment when you pick out a husband ez you do when you choose a boarder, you'll do first-rate." The young woman blushed.

Then they talked about the proper price for Zadoc's board, and they all agreed that two dollars a week would be fair. Zadoc paid down the two dollars in advance, and was without a cent in the world, for Bryan had taken his other dollar for the two bad meals. But Zadoc did not mind that, and within fifteen minutes he had moved his possessions into a clean little whitewashed room in the second story of the widow Dadd's house. The widow was much troubled at the sight of his rifle; but she finally consented to let it hang on his white wall, and Zadoc ate his supper, although he had eaten one already, and made the meal as cheerful as he could to Mrs. Dadd and her daughter, which was not difficult to him, for it was a good supper. A little before six he marched off to Mr. Thorndyke's.

Mr. Thorndyke paid him his dollar and a half, and Zadoc broached a new project.

"There's that there ash-heap o' yourn," he said, "why can't I cart that off fer you?"

"But you haven't a cart," Mr. Thorndyke objected.

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"I'll have one," Zadoc said. "What's the job wuth?"

"I've always paid a dollar."

Zadoc rubbed his chin and mused. "I'll call on ye for thet dollar when I've earned it," he said. "Evenin'!"

Zadoc had been at the back of the house during the day, and had sized up the ash-heap, as well as one or two other things. He walked down to the quarry and got the big gray and his cart, and drove up to the Thorndykes' back yard. There he shovelled the ash-heap (the shovel went with the horse and cart) into the vehicle. There was just one load. There had been a heavy rain during the night, and the ashes were packed close. The cart held a cubic

yard, and it was not overloaded when Zadoc drove it down the road toward the old quarry.

As he drove he looked ahead, and he noticed that the sidewalks, or raised paths to right and left of the road, were made of ashes pounded down—not cinders from the railroad, but ordinary hard-coal ashes, beaten into a compact mass. Before he had driven half a mile he saw, some hundred feet in front of him, a broad break in the sidewalk to his right—a gully washed out by the rain. He stopped his horse behind a clump of trees, alighted, and walked forward to the gate in front of a comfortable house. The owner was pottering about, looking at the vines that were beginning to climb up the wires on his veranda. Zadoc accosted him.

"Evenin'! You've got a bad hole in that there path o'yourn."

"Are you a road-inspector?" asked the man of the house, in a disagreeable tone of voice.

"No," said Zadoc, "I'm a road-mender. You've got ter fill that hole up. S'pose I fill it up fer you fer fifty cents?"

"Yer ain't going to drive out here and mend that walk for half a dollar, are you?" the man asked, incredulously.

"I'm a-goin' to take it on my reggleler rowt," replied Zadoc. "Does she go?"

The man looked over the fence at the big hole. "She goes," he said.

It was just one hour later, when some light lingered in the sky, that the householder with the broken sidewalk paid Zadoc Pine his fifty cents. He paid it with a dazed look on his face; but Zadoc was as bright and airy as usual as he pocketed the money and drove back to the quarry-stables. His cubic yard of ashes had filled the gap and left a little over, with which he had patched a few smaller breaks.

When Zadoc arose on the morrow and stepped out of doors to breathe the morning air, he saw the white-haired widow chopping kindling-wood in the shed.

"That ain't no work fer you," he said.

"Who's to do it?" the widow asked; "my darter, her arm's lame. She lamed it

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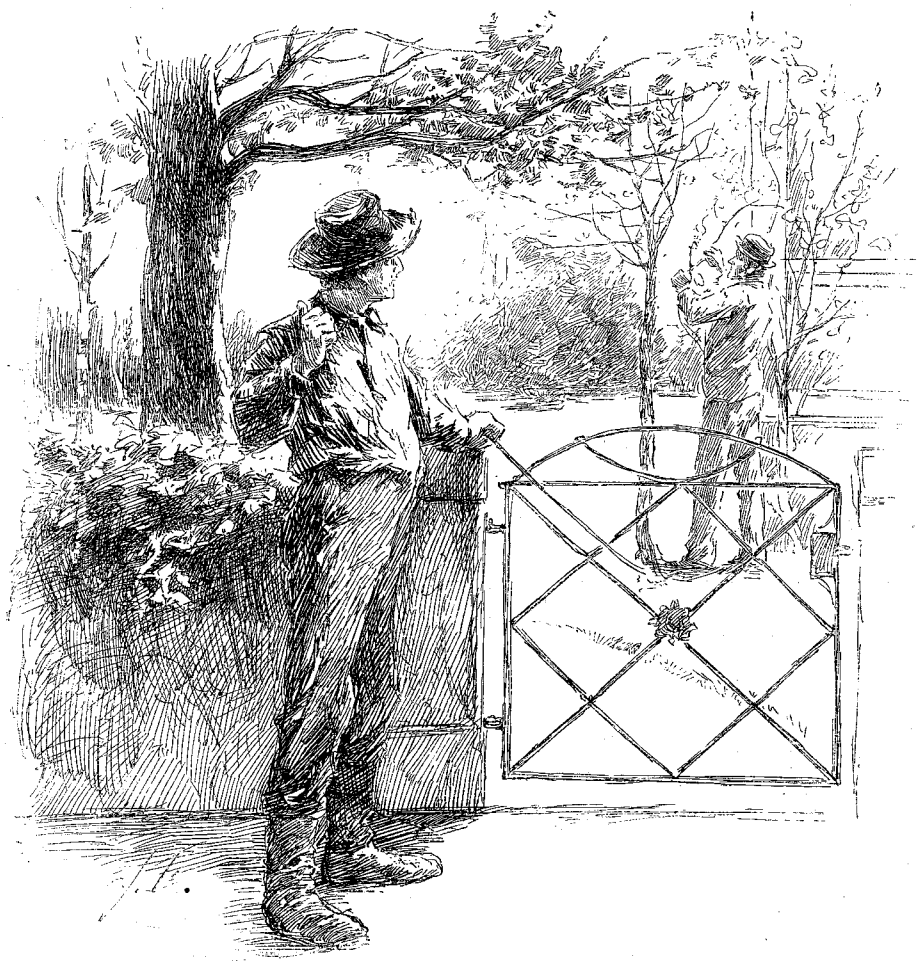
snatchin' a child off the railroad-track in front of the engyne. The engyne hit her. It was one o' them delegate's children, an' no thanks to nobody. Who's to chop kindlin', if I don't?"

"I be, I reckon," said Zadoc. He took the hatchet out of her hands and split up a week's supply. It was sharp work on an empty stomach; but he took it out of the breakfast, a little later.

After breakfast he walked down to Centre, the nearest large town, and spent an hour in a paint-shop there. He asked a great many questions, and the men in the shop had a good deal of fun with him. Zadoc knew it, but he did not care. "Amoosed them, don't hurt me, an' keeps the derned fools talkin'," he said to himself.

He returned to South Ridge in time for dinner, and in the afternoon sallied out to look for a job. Remembering the Bixbys and the Baxters, and the fact that "Andy" did not care for more than two days' work in the week, Zadoc thought he would offer his services to the two families. "Thar' ain't no room in this world," he reflected, "for two-day men. The six-day men has first call on all jobs."



The Bixbys gave him the work, and paid him a dollar for the afternoon's work; but he could not come to terms with the Baxters. They wanted him to take fifty cents for half a day's work.

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"But you'd 'a' had ter pay that there other feller a dollar," Zadoc objected.

"But that's different," said Mrs. Baxter; "you aren't a regular gardener, you know."

"The job ain't different," replied Zadoc; "and ef Andy c'n get a dollar fer it, I'm a-goin' to let him have it." And he shook his long legs down the road.

He loomed up, long and bony, before Mr. Thorndyke just after dinner.

"You've come to cart the ash-heap away, I suppose?" Mr. Thorndyke said.

"That ash-heap moved out of town last evenin'. Ef you've got time, though, I want yer to step around to the back o' the house. Got somethin' to show yer."

The "something" was Mr. Thorndyke's barn. He kept no horse; but the small building that goes with every well-regulated cottage in New Jersey he utilized as a play-room for his children and a gymnasium for himself.

"That there barn," Zadoc told him, "is jest a sight to look at. It stands to the north o' the house, an' takes all the weather there is. The paint's most off it. Look at these here big scales! I took one of those there fer a sample, and here's the color, the way it ought to be, on this here bit o' shingle." Zadoc pulled the sample out of his pocket. "Now you wanter let me *paint* that barn for yer. I've figgered thet it'll cost yer jest twenty-five dollars. Thet's a savin' for *you*, an' I c'n take my time about it, and put in a week on the job an' do some other work round the town at the same time."

"Have you other engagements?" Mr. Thorndyke asked.

"No," was Zadoc's answer; "but I'm goin' to hev 'em."

"But do you know how to paint?"

"Anythin' the matter with my gardenin'?"

"No."

"All right on ash-heaps, ain't I?"

"I suppose so."

"Well, you jest try me on paint. Same old terms—no satisfaction, no pay. I can't make that there barn look wuss'n it does now; an' I'm goin' ter make it look a heap better."

The next afternoon Zadoc was painting the Thorndyke barn. He worked there only in the afternoons; in the mornings he hunted up odd jobs about the town, and the money he got for these he took to Centre and invested in paint and brushes. As he paid cash, he had to buy in small quantities; but when the barn was painted—and it was painted to Mr. Thorndyke's satisfaction—Zadoc found himself something more like a capitalist than he had ever been in his life.

But there was one unpleasant incident connected with this job. He was sitting one afternoon in the children's swing, which he had borrowed to use in painting those parts of the barn which he could not reach with a ladder; he tied the ends of the ropes around the cupola, twisted himself up to the ridge-pole, and untwisted himself as he painted downward. He was slathering away on his second coat, whistling cheerily to himself, when a man in overalls and a painty jacket came up and made some remarks about the weather. Zadoc told him that the weather was a good thing to take as it came; and then the man inquired:

"Do you belong to the union?"

"What union?" asked Zadoc; "I ain't no Canuck, ef thet's what yer mean."

"The house-painters' union," said the man.

"Well, no," said Zadoc, still slathering away, with his head on one side. "Guess I'm union enough, all by myself. I'm perfec'ly united, I am—all harmonious and unanimous an' comfortable."

"What are you a-paintin' for, then?" demanded the stranger.

"Fer money," said Zadoc. "What are you a-foolin' round here for?"

"Have you ever served an apprenticeship to this business?" the man asked.

"Hev you ever served an apprenticeship ter rollin' off a log?" Zadoc asked, by way of answer.

The man muttered something and moved away. Zadoc communed with himself.

"Ap-prenticeship ter sloppin' paint! Well, I be derned! Why, fool-work like thet's born in a man, same's swimmin'."

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As Zadoc became known to the community, he found that work came right to his hand. The laboring native of South Ridge was the sort of man who

said, when a job was offered to him: "Well, I guess I'll take a day off some time week arter next and 'tend to it." This energetic person from the North Woods, who made engagements and kept them, was a revelation to the householders of the town. He mended fences and roads; he cut grass and sodded lawns; he put in panes of glass and whitewashed kitchens; he soldered leaky refrigerators and clothes-boilers; he made paths and dug beds; he beat carpets and pumped water into garret tanks—in short, he did everything that a man can do with muscle and intelligent application. He was not afraid to do a thing because he had never done it before.

Moreover, he made his services acceptable by doing, as a rule, more than his contract called for. He was not above treating his employers as so many fellow human beings. When the doctor prescribed wild-cherry cordial for Mrs. Thorndyke, Zadoc put in a whole afternoon in scouring the country for wild-cherries, and brought back a large basketful. He would take no pay.

"Them's with my compliments," he said. "They growed wild, an' I guess they growed wild a-puppus. Knowed thar waz sick folks a-needin' of 'em, mebbe."

. . . . . .

But it was not to be all plain sailing for Zadoc. One evening he went home to the widow Dadd's, and found the widow in tears and her daughter flushed and indignant. They told him that a "boycott" had been declared against him for doing union-men's work, and against them for harboring him. The butcher of the town, who was also the green-grocer, would sell Mrs. Dadd nothing more until she turned Zadoc out of doors. Centre was the nearest town from which she could get supplies, and Centre was three miles away.

Zadoc walked over to the butcher's shop. The butcher was a German.

"What's this here, Schmitzer?" he demanded. "Ain't my money good enough fer you?"

"I ken't help it, Mr. Pine," said Schmitzer, sullenly. "If I don' boygott you, dem fellis boygott me. I got noddin' against you, Mr. Pine, but I ken't sell you no mead, nor Mrs. Tatt neider."

"Runnin' me out of town, are ye?" Zadoc said. "Well, we run men out whar I come from. But we don't run 'em out onless they've *done* suthin', an' they don't let 'emselves be run out onless they've done suthin'. I ain't done nothin' but what I ought, an' I'm a-goin' ter stay here."

He went back to the widow Dadd's,

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and told her that he would take charge of the commissariat. That night he got a large packing-case, which Mr. Vredenburg was quite willing to give him, and a barrow-load of saw-dust from the waste-heap at the saw-mill. After an hour's work he had a fairly good ice-box, and by the next night he had that box filled with ice from Centre, and with meat and vegetables from New York. Zadoc read the papers; he had seen the market-reports, and now he was able to determine, by actual experiment, the difference between South Ridge prices and New York market-prices. He discovered that the difference was very nearly forty per cent. The express company's charge for transportation was forty cents for an ordinary flour-barrel, well packed.

Zadoc saw a new vista opening before him. He called on Mr. Thorndyke, and proposed to do that stately person's marketing, and to divide the forty per cent. profit evenly between them. Mr. Thorndyke was at first doubtful and suspicious. He cross-examined Zadoc, and found out what had started the young man on this new line. Then his manners changed. Mr. Thorndyke was not in the habit of carrying himself very graciously toward those whom he considered his social inferiors. But now he grasped Zadoc's hand and shook it heartily.

"I'm glad to know this, Pine," he said. "If you've got the pluck to fight those cowardly brutes and their boycott, I'll stand by you. You may try your hand at the marketing, and if you suit Mrs. Thorndyke, all right. If you don't, we'll find something else for you to do."

Zadoc went in town on the morrow with a list of Mrs. Thorndyke's domestic needs. He had, on his previous visit, sought out the venders who dealt in only one quality of goods, and that the best. To these, in his ignorance of the details of marketing, he thought it best to apply, although their higher prices diminished his profits. In this way he was able to send home a full week's supply of the best meat and vegetables in the market. They proved to be better than Schmitzer's best, and Mr. Thorndyke paid a bill smaller by one-fifth than he had ever received from Schmitzer. Zadoc was only forty-three cents to the good; but he had made his point. Within one month he was buying for ten families, and receiving the blessing of ten weary housewives, who found it easier to sit down of a Friday night, lay out a bill of fare for the week, and hand it to Zadoc Pine with a tranquil dismissal of all further care, than it had been to meet every recurring morning, the old, old question: What shall we have for dinner to-day? And Zadoc found his profit therein.

. . . . . .

One warm evening in September Zadoc Pine sat in the front yard of the widow Dadd's house, whittling a plug for the cider-barrel. He looked up from his whittling and saw a party of a dozen men come up the road and stop at the gate. He arose and went forward to meet them.

"Good-evenin', friends!" he said, driving his jack-knife into the top rail of the fence and leaning over the pickets: "Want to see me, I s'pose? What c'n I do fer ye?"

One man came forward and put himself at the head of the party. Zadoc knew him by sight. It was McCuskey, the "walking-delegate."

"You can get out of this town," said McCuskey, "as fast as you know how to. We'll give you ten hours."

"That's friendly-like," said Zadoc. "I ain't had a present o' ten hours' free time made me sence I wuz a boy at school."

"Well," McCuskey broke in, annoyed at some suppressed laughter in his rear, "you can take them ten hours and use them to get out of South Ridge."

"Ken, eh?" said Zadoc. "Well, now, ef I've gotter go, I've gotter go. I ain't got no objection. But I jest wanter know *what* I've gotter go fer. Then maybe I'll see if I'll go or not."

"You have got to go," McCuskey began, "because you have interfered with the inalienable rights of labor; because you have taken the bread out of the mouths of honest toilers———"

"Sho!" Zadoc interrupted him, "don't talk no sech fool-talk ez that! I ain't taken no bread outer no man's mouth. I ain't got down to that yet. S'pose you tell me in plain English what I've done to be run outer town fer?"

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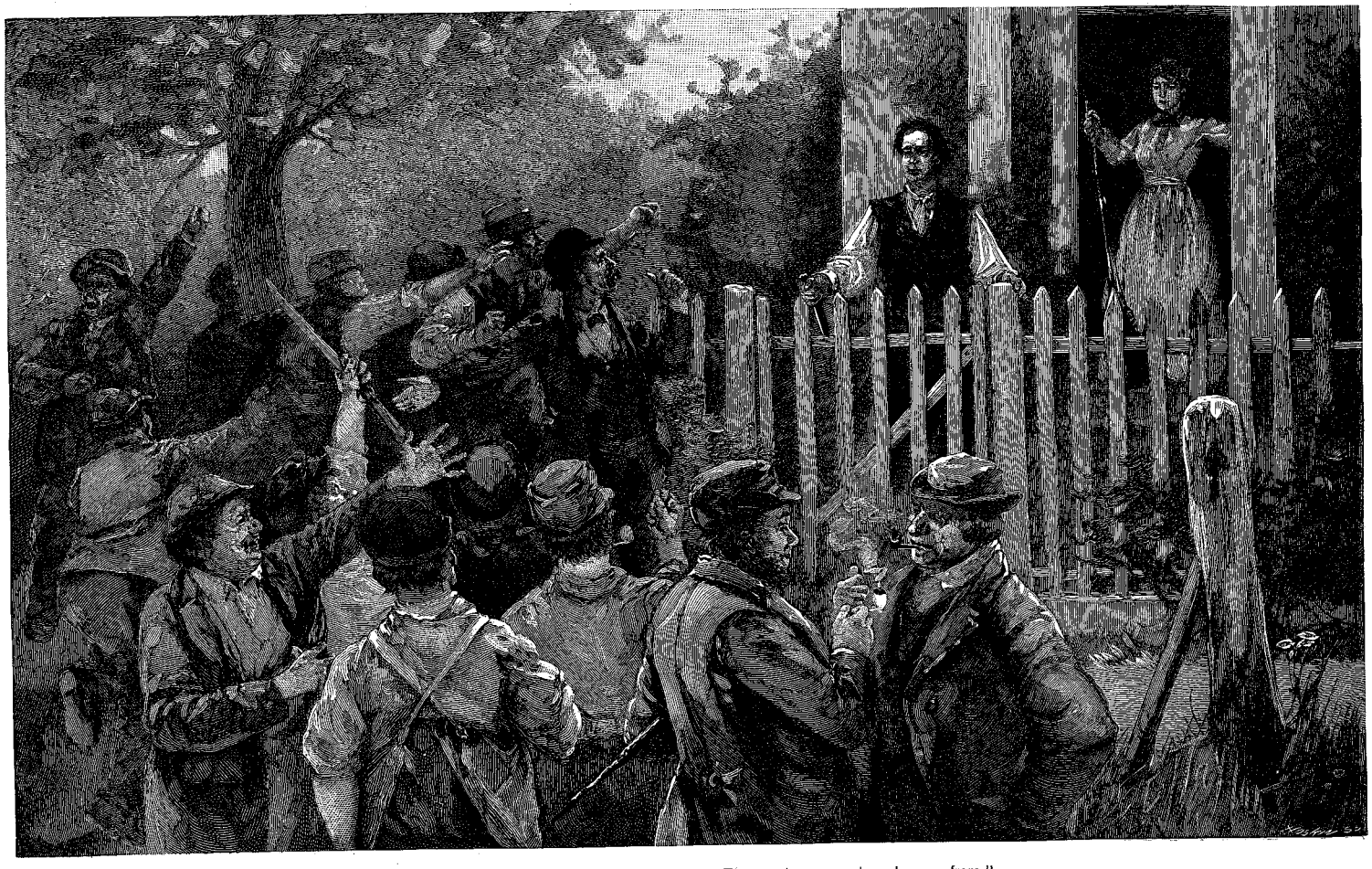

"I came from the North Woods," he said. "They make men where I came from."

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There was more hushed laughter in the spokesman's rear, and he set his teeth angrily before he opened his lips again.

"You have no trade, and you have taken jobs away from men who have trades. You took away a painter's job when you painted that barn on the hill."

"I didn't take away no painter's job. It wazn't nobody's job—it wazn't no job at all until I made a job of it. Ef the painter wanted it, why didn't he go an' get it?"

"You've took away Andy Conner's gardening-work all around the town."

"Tha's so!" from Andy Conner, at the back of the crowd.

"Where was Andy Conner when I took his jobs away from him?" Zadoc asked, and answered himself: "Drunk, in Bryan's back yard. Andy Conner works two days in the week, an' I work six. I ain't got no time to be sortin' out Andy Conner's jobs from mine."

Then there came a husky howl from out the thickest of the crowd.

"Vell, you take avay my chob, aynyhow! You take my bissness avay—you take my boocher bissness."

"Ah!" said Zadoc, "that's you, Schmitzer, is it? Yes, yer right. I'm tak'n yer job away—the best I know how. But I didn't take it away until you took the food outer my mouth—thet's what ye did, an' no fancy talk, neither—an' outer the mouths o' two helpless wimmin. An' under them circumstances, every time, I'd take your job away, ef you was the President of the United States."

This was a solemn asseveration for Zadoc. He respected the office of the President of the United States. But it was lost on his hearers. No man in that crowd respected the President of the United States. There came a low, growling murmur from the group:

"Kill him! Hang the scab! Kill him!"

"Kill?"

Zadoc let out a voice that only the Adirondack hills had heard before. Then he checked himself, and talked quietly, yet so that every man on the street heard him.

"I came from the North Woods," he said. "They make *men* whar I came from. I ain't wronged no man in this town. I come here to make my livin', an' here I'll stay. Ef you wanter fight, I'll fight yer, one at a time, or the hull gang! Ye can kill me, but ye've gotter kill me *here*. An' ef it comes ter killin', I c'n hold my end up. I c'n kill a rabbit at forty rod, an' I own my rifle yit. But I know ye won't give me no fair fight; ye want to crawl up behine me. Well, I'm a man from the woods. I c'n hear ye a half a mile off, an' I c'n smell ye a hundred yards."

He made an end, and stood looking at them. He had picked up his big jack-knife, and was jabbing its blade deep into the top rail of the fence and picking it out again. A silence fell upon the crowd. Zadoc Pine was a large man and a strong man. He had a knife, and in the door-way behind him stood the widow Dadd's daughter with his rifle, held ready for him.

Zadoc broke the silence.

"Boys," he said, "I ain't no hog. I want you to understand thet I'm goin' to earn my own livin' my own way. I take what work I c'n get; an' ef other folks is shif'less enough ter leave their work fer me ter do, thet's *their* business. I've took one man's job away from him fer cause. But I ain't got no spite ag'in him. He's on'y a fool-furriner. Thet's you, Schmitzer. An' ter show you that I ain't got no spite agin yer, I'm a-goin' ter make you an offer. I'll take yer inter partnership."

There was a derisory laugh at this from the whole delegation, but Zadoc checked it.

"Schmitzer," he said, "you come inside here and talk it over with me. I ain't goin to hurt ye, an' yer friends here'll go down street ter Bryan's an' take a drink. The've been a-talkin', an' I guess they're thirsty."

After a moment of irresolute hesitation the delegation moved off. The men were puzzled. The exiling of Zadoc Pine seemed no longer a simple matter, and they felt the need of discussing a new situation. Zadoc and Schmitzer were left together in the little stone house.

"Schmitzer," said Zadoc, "I'm makin' most as much clean profit outer my ten families ez you're makin' out of yer whole business, an' I don't have no rent

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t'pay. Here's my figgers—look 'em over! Now, Schmitzer, thar's no end of business hereabouts thet you ain't worked up. These farmers all around about are livin' on salt pork, an' eatin' butchers' meat wunst a week. We've gotter get their trade and teach 'em Christian livin'. These here quarrymen ain't eatin' meat like they oughter. S'pose we show 'em what they c'n get for a dollar?"

Schmitzer looked carefully over Zadoc's figures. He knew the risks of carrying perishable stock. He saw that people bought more when the opportunities of the great markets were offered to them. Before he left the house he had agreed to work with Zadoc, and to follow his leader in the new scheme for supplying South Ridge with meat and vegetables.

"An' what'll yer friends down street say?" queried Zadoc.

"I don' care vot dey say," responded Schmitzer; "dose fellus ain't no good. I got better bissness now. If dey don' like it, dey go down to Cender un' bring deir meat home demselfs."

. . . . . .

Zadoc retains his share in the Pine & Schmitzer Supply Company; but after he had drummed up the local trade on the new basis, and broken Schmitzer into the routine work, he branched off for himself in a new line.

He had found an amateur electrician among his customers, and with this gentleman's aid he organized the South Ridge Fire Department and Protective Association. Thirty-six householders paid him ten dollars for the plant and ten dollars for yearly service; and he connected their houses in an electric circuit, of which his own bedroom was the central station. In each house was a combined bell and alarm; and if a citizen awoke at night to find his chimney on fire or to hear a stranger within his chicken-house, he rang a wild tocsin in thirty-five other houses, and then

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sounded a signal-letter by dot and dash to proclaim his identity. Then the whole town turned out, and Zadoc drove a small chemical engine behind Schmitzer's horse. If the cause of the disturbance was a chicken-thief, and the cause was caught, Zadoc played upon him.

"Can't bring out thet engyne fer nothin'," he said; "she's gotter serve a moral purpose somehow."

Two years and a half have passed since Zadoc left the North Woods. He is an employer now, and an owner of real-estate, in a small way, and he still has South Ridge under his protecting wing, and keeps her yards clean and her lawns trim—or his men do. Moreover, he is the husband of the girl whose smile first welcomed him to the Ridge.

"Man must earn his bread in the sweat of his brow," he has said; "but some men sweat inside o' their heads an' some outside. I'm workin' my brain. I could 'a' done more with it ef I 'a' had edication. When that there boy o' mine gets a few years on top o' the six weeks he's got now, I'll give him all he wants, an' he c'n do the swaller-tail business ef he wants to. Thet goes with edication."

"You have done much for the town, Mr. Pine," the dominie once said to him, "and I am glad to say that your success has been due to the application of sound principles—those principles on which true success has ever been founded."

"Yaas," said Zadoc, meditatively, "an' then—I'm an Amerikin, an' I guess thet goes for suthin'."

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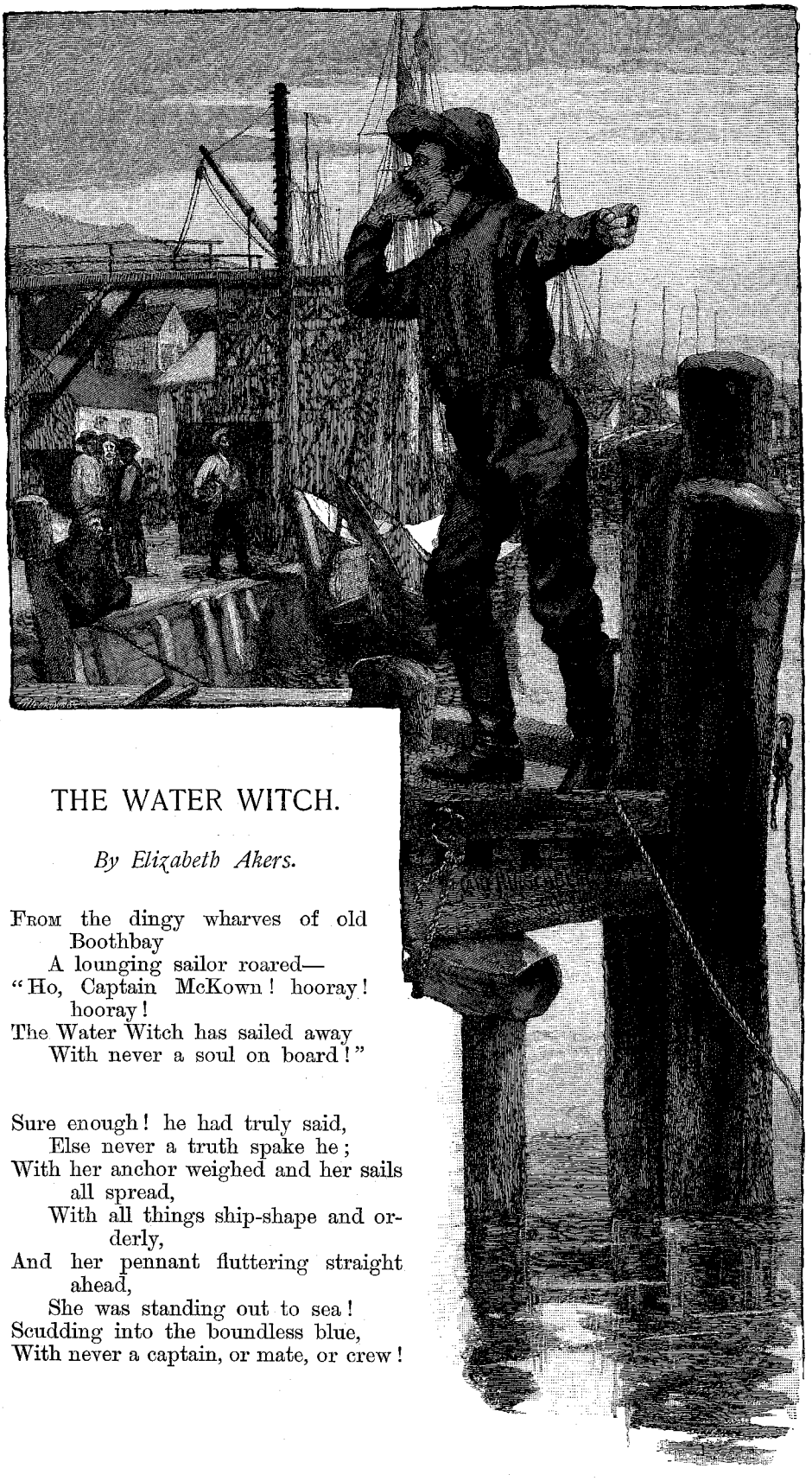

THE WATER WITCH.

By Elizabeth Akers.

From the dingy wharves of old
Boothbay
A lounging sailor roared—
"Ho, Captain McKown! hooray!
hooray!
The Water Witch has sailed away
With never a soul on board!"

Sure enough! he had truly said,
Else never a truth spake he;
With her anchor weighed and her sails
all spread,
With all things ship-shape and or-
derly,
And her pennant fluttering straight
ahead,
She was standing out to sea!
Scudding into the boundless blue,
With never a captain, or mate, or crew!

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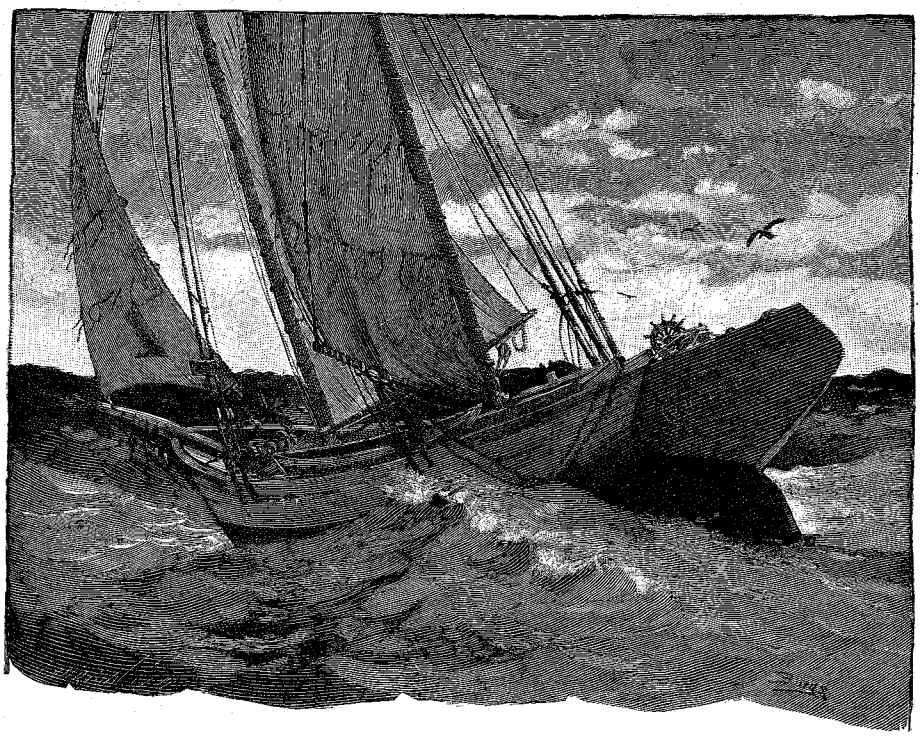

The breeze had whispered a wooing word
To the crank, impatient craft;
She felt her wings like a new-fledged bird—
Her slow roll changed to a sudden pitch,
And, stretching her canvas every stitch,
Away went the tricksy Water Witch
With the warlock wind abaft!

Where was her captain, all this time?
The skipper, proud of his grizzled prime—
Ready and rugged Captain McKown—
Sturdiest tar in the salt old town,
With hands like leather, and face burned brown
By sea-fog, and wind, and sun?
With his rolling gait and his sinewy form,
And voice like a distant thunder-storm
Ere the tempest has begun?

Wherever he was, how sank his heart,
How leaped his pulse with a sickening start,
When the startled sailor roared—
And every wharf-rat joined the shout,
And every loiterer round about—
"The Water Witch has started out
With never a soul aboard!"

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Alas, for trusting the treacherous deep!
All day the ocean had seemed asleep;
  No gentlest breath of a zephyr stirred—
  Not even the wing of a passing bird
    Had dimpled the level main.
And the confident captain, quite at ease,
Seeing no sign of the wished-for breeze,
  And little guessing what Furies fell
Fate was sending along his track,
    Stepped serenely on shore again,
  And tarried a moment to say farewell—
    Alack-a-day! alack!

Into his dory like light he flew,
Taking two of his trusty crew.
"Come!" bawled desperate Captain McKown,
  In a voice that shook the sleepy town—
"Stand to your oars with might and main!
    Row, if you never row again!
  If you can capture the Water Witch,
  One of you fellows, I don't care which—
Though he be as poor as a meadow-crane,
  (And I've always sworn she should marry rich)—
    Shall have my daughter Jane!"

Roused by the unexpected spur—
For each had secretly sighed for her—
They never questioned nor made demur,
    Nor paused for a jealous thrill—
No time for rivals to fume and frown—
And the two bluff sailors, brave and brown,
Possible husbands of Jane McKown,
    Bent to the oars with a will;
But every moment the wide, bright reach
Between their boat and the Water Witch
    Grew broader, broader still!

Vainly they pulled, and puffed, and swore;
Vainly did streams of sweat down pour
  From straining shoulder and bending back—
  Limbs might labor, and sinews crack,
  But, pausing neither to veer or tack,
The wild Witch mocked at their white-oak breeze,
As, dancing and dipping with graceful ease,
  She scudded along her foamy track,
And gained on the dory more and more—
    Alack-a-day! alack!

Merrily bowled the truant craft;
  Free as a soul that has never sinned,
  She sped straight on, ahead of the wind—
Her taut sails never a wrinkle stirred;

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The breeze and billows sang and laughed,
And her wroth pursuers heard,
As she flew along like a frigate-bird
And left them far abaft.
Without a shudder of straining sail
Did the runaway vessel ride,
Urged by the freshening of the gale,
And helped by the treacherous tide.
Afar from Boothbay's rocks and sand,
Out of sight of the gazing land,
Straight southeast did the vessel fly,
Into the mist 'twixt wave and sky;
And long ere baffled Captain McKown,
Drenched and weary, pulled back to town—
Too tired for rage and too wroth for speech—
His vessel was out of human reach,
With only her topsails, faint and dim,
Above the horizon's rim.

Gone forever! and who shall tell
Where she wandered, and what befell,
Sooner or later, the runaway,
Restless rover from far Boothbay?
Did the ghosts of sailors long ago
Drowned in the salty depths below
Gather again their wave-bleached bones
From the greedy locker of Davy Jones,
And, climbing her side at dead of night,
Pallid and awful, a grewsome sight,
Spring to their places and shout, "Ay! ay!"
To a spectral captain's trumpet-cry,
And pull at the ropes, a ghastly row,
With a mocking chorus of, "Yo! heave, ho!"
Till the wild waves howled in fright?
And when, dismantled by storm and shock,
And the lightning's bolt, and the whirlwind's force,
She plunged and drove toward a fatal rock,
Staggering blindly along her course,
Did the petrel, wraith of the raging deep,
Perch on the taffrail and weep, and weep,
While the winds wailed wild and hoarse?

Or did some gracious and kindly breeze,
Sporting over the sunny seas,
Waft her lovingly—waft her far
From cruel lee-shore and treacherous bar
Which never a vessel unwrecked could pass—
To a realm of Neptune, far apart
From track of vessel or sweep of glass,
Whose lovely isles of enchanted ground
No rude discoverer ever found,
Or mariner noted upon his chart?
Some wonderful archipelago,
Where crystal currents forever flow
Round meadows of fadeless green,

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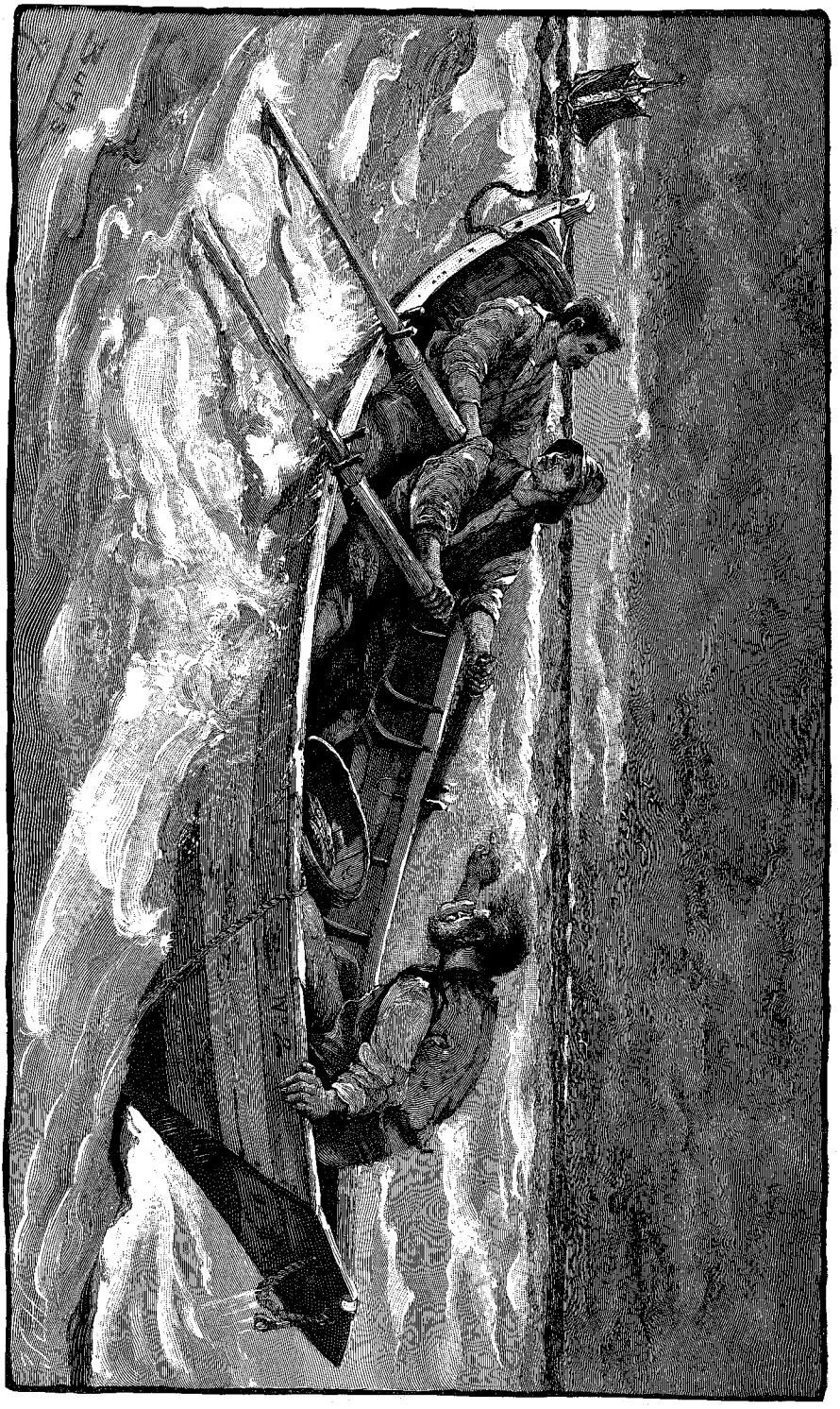

"Row, if you never row again!"

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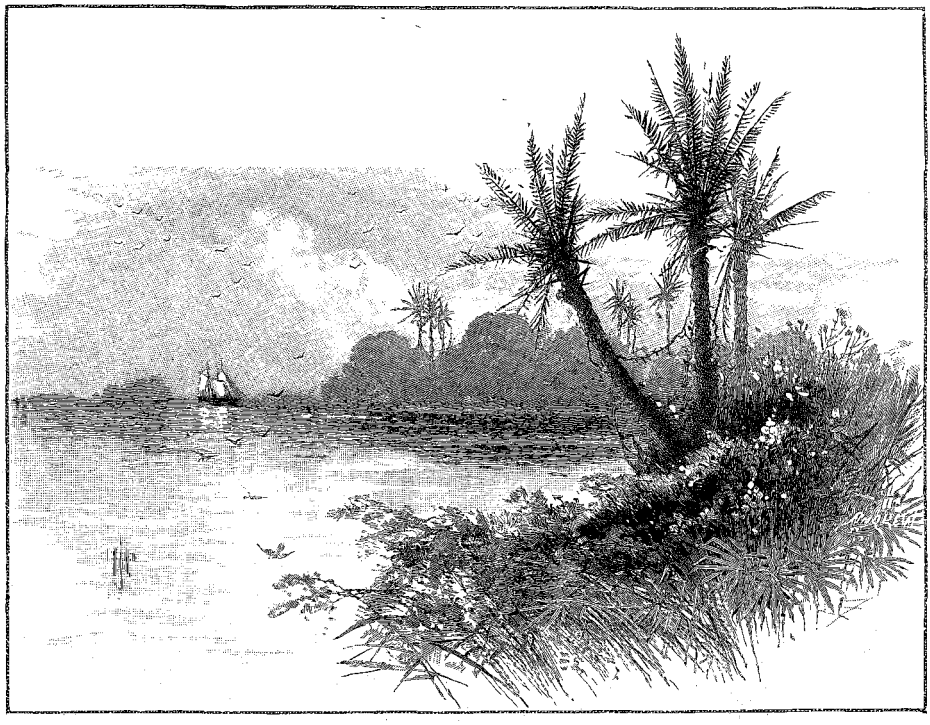

Where marvellous fruits and flowers grow,
Of richer flavor and brighter glow
Than any by mortal ever seen;
Some Eden-garden of unspoiled bliss,
Where never the guileful serpent's hiss
Or forked tongue's persuasiveness
Has led the way to sin—
Since never a human footstep trod
The tender bloom of the virgin sod—
Or sorrow or strife has been;
Where never the greed of man has made
The innocent birds and beasts afraid,
Or wronged their trust by the base intent
Of fell destruction, or bondage sore
Under the dread of his cruel ire;
Or vexed the waters with keel or oar,
Or spoiled the forests with axe and fire,
Or made fair Nature his slave, and bent
Her strength to serve him, or scarred and rent
Her bosom for precious ore.

There, becalmed in some azure bay,
Does she softly drift and drift all day,
While round her the darting dolphins play,
And the nautilus spreads its sail,
While her idle canvas flaps alway
As the languorous breezes fail;

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And the gurgle about her lazy prow
  Is sweet as the ripples in Cashmere's vale,
Or the jug-jug-jug, in a myrtle-bough,
    Of the Persian nightingale?

Or, safely moored, does she swing and swing,
While sirens sit in her shrouds and sing—
  The same fair sirens which, oft and oft,
Since poets' and travellers' tales began,
  Have lured to ruin the credulous, soft,
Susceptible heart of the sailor-man?
  While mermaids, sporting about her keel,
Chase each other at hide and seek,
Or climb her side in a merry freak,
  And take their turns at the useless wheel;
Or pelt each other with bells of foam,
  Now in the wave and now in the air;
Or lean on the bulwarks, and comb and comb
    Their beautiful sea-green hair?

If these things chanced to the runaway,
  In the far-off regions she wandered through,
After she vanished, that summer day,
From the eager eyes of all Boothbay
    Which watched her as she flew;
Or if, once hidden from human view,
  She earned her name of the Water Witch

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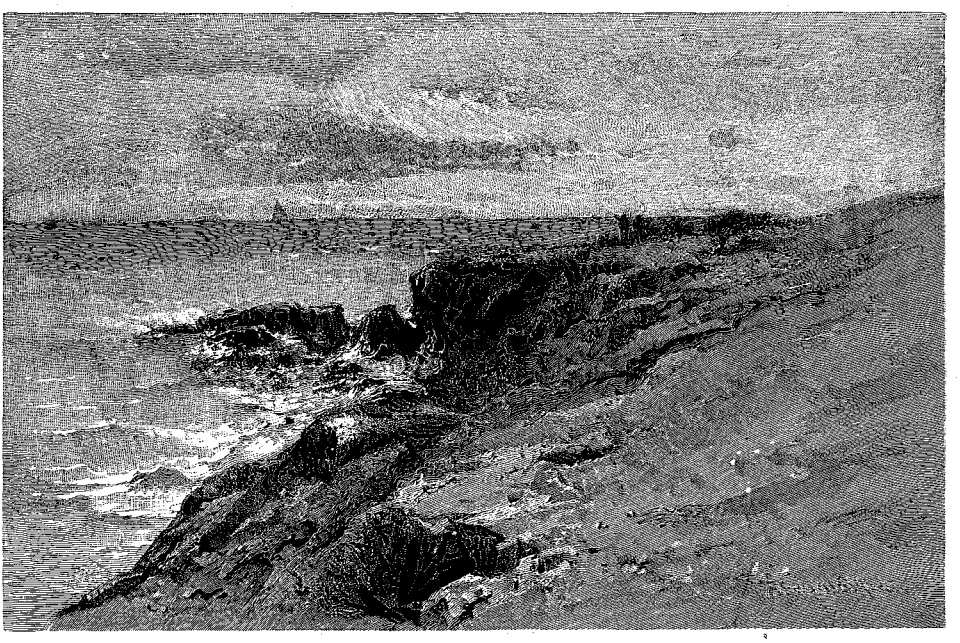
By shipping, at midnight, a demon crew
Who howled and gibbered as up the shrouds
They swarmed and clambered in grisly crowds,
When sky and ocean were black as pitch,
While their evil eyes burned blue
With a blaze of the cold, uncanny light
Seen in a haunted crypt at night
Where spooks do walk—eheu!—
And cruises yet, under baleful stars,
A flying terror to voyaging tars—
No sailor or landsman, young or old,
Has ever in song or story told,
Because—he never knew.

The waves which bellow their fierce refrain
Against the storm-worn coast of Maine,
Beating themselves till they roar with pain,
No other clew afford
Than over and over again to say
That once, on a sunny summer day,
Watched by the eyes of all Boothbay,
The eerie Water Witch sailed away
With never a soul on board;
And since, though over the broad blue bay
Blows often and often a favoring breeze,
And many a vessel, long away,
Has found and followed the homeward track,
That lonely rover of unknown seas
From the realm of ocean mysteries
Has never more come back—
Alack-a-day! alack!



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In the history of the arts and letters two cities have been leaders of nations—Athens and Florence;—and two fountain-heads—the Ilyssus and the Arno—have poured their waters into the fields of the world. Ancient Athens is a ruin; but to-day the little city of Florence holds the thoughtful as does no other, even in Italy. It is not the past alone which makes it interesting; it is the fact that there we have the printed page and the record in stone side by side,—that there more than anywhere else the historic souvenir stands visible and tangible.

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In Egypt the temples rise from the sands that have covered the life of the people, and in Rome the skeleton of the antique world stands bare and gaunt upon a soil which is itself the dust of bygone civilizations; but in Florence the same walls which to-day resound to the traffic of the towns-people and the polyglot enthusiasm of the tourists echoed the talk of Dante and Guido Cavalcante; the arches that reverberate the loiterer's mandolin gave back the music of Squacialupi and the songs of Lorenzo the Magnificent as he "roamed the town o' nights" with his companions. The same windows which see the English or American families starting with their little red books to do the city, saw the hooded Michael Angelo stepping from his house in the Via Ghibellina, bending over the staff kept there to this day, and turning his face toward San Lorenzo, where his giants lay waiting for him to free them from their marble prison.

Paris has levelled her mediæval streets to build wide boulevards, and London's commerce has overlaid the ancient city: but in Florence you may go with Michael Angelo to San Lorenzo by the self-same streets and turnings; you may follow the crowd trooping to hear Savonarola in the Duomo, may pass the shops where immortal painters worked in the days when painters *non facevano i cavalieri*, and stand before shrines at street-corners famous in Florentine romance, where you walk hand in hand with Boccaccio and Sacchetti as easily as with Baedeker and Murray. Against the wall at your elbow the shoulders of some Ghibelline have been set hard—the stones rubbed by his mailed shirt. The great dint in the stone was made by the missile whirled from a mangonel upon some tower that still rises brown and solid as ever. "Magnificently stern and sombre are the streets of beautiful Florence," said Dickens, and hardly anyone has said better; but if her beauty be somewhat high and frowning, it lives with us the longer, and all about her she wears a garland of olive, well fitted to the city which opened the path of modern thought.

The foreigners have loved Florence so much as to make her half their own. To the Tuscan the *forestieri* are as familiar as the Bargello itself; and it is no mean proof of the dignity and beauty of the city that the inevitable fringe of frippery which hangs upon the skirts of a tourist invasion cannot belittle her.

But it is not all frippery. No city has been more admirably photographed than Florence. The Tuscans are a reading people; or at any rate there are shops full of books, while Vieusseux's noble circulating library has hardly its equal. In it are histories of Florence, big and little, by famous men of by-gone centuries, whose memorial tablets shine upon the city-walls to-day—the Villani, whose house is in the Via de' Giraldi by the Bargello; Machiavelli and Guicciardini, whose names you may see near the Pitti palace; Varchi and Nardi, and many others; historians, partial and impartial, Piagnoni and Medicean.

But to those *forestieri* who speak our English language, no book in the long line has the fascination of the "Romola" of George Eliot. As in the words of Nello, Romola seems the lily of Florence incarnate against the brown background of the old city. Florence seems more familiar and akin to us because we can follow her footsteps about it, and see her between the great reformer and the Judas who betrayed them both, and attended by a whole Shakespearean train—Nello, the barber; Bratti, the ironmonger; Brigida, the dear old simpleton; Tessa, the little sleepy, loving animal; and many others interwoven upon a background of the life and thought of the time.

A whole panorama is unrolled for us, made living by characters, some historic, some fictitious, but all penetrated with the spirit of the fifteenth century, and moving upon the great currents of the age—the desire for civic autonomy, the striving for reform, the passionate enthusiasm for the resurgent culture of antiquity. We listen to Savonarola in the Duomo; to Capponi, speaking for liberty in the palace of the Via Larga. The life of the scholars passes before us in the intense earnestness of old Bardo, or the witty trifling of the Medicean plotters in the Rucellai gardens, and exhibits one of its most characteristic sides in the sayings of the brilliant smatterer, Nello. People famous in history meet us; some, like Piero di

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Cosimo, to take part in the story, others only to appear and disappear. Artists greet us for a moment—wild young Mariotto Albertinelli, with his model, emerges into the light of festival-lamps upon the Annunziata place; his beloved friend, Fra Bartolommeo, stands in the glow of the bonfire of vanities with Cronaca and Sandro Botticelli; young Niccolò Macchiavelli talks to us as only George Eliot could make him talk. Charles VIII. of France, whose almost monstrous face we find to-day in a terra-cotta of the Bargello, passes—we see the slit of a mouth, and the "miserable leg" upon the housings of gold; and the expedition of the king to Naples, so heavy with consequences to Italy and the world, becomes an important factor in the story. We listen to the inevitable opponents of Savonarola and reform—the artistic opponents, who sighed over the Boccaccios that burned upon the bonfire; the brutal opponents, in Dolfo Spini's compagnacci and their hatred of all decency; the foolish opponents, in Monna Brigida's thankfulness that the reformer had "not quite turned the world upside down," since "there were jellies with the arms of the Albizzi and Acciajoli on them" at the Acciajoli wedding-feast. We stand upon the cathedral square—Piagnoni at heart, everyone of us—through the author's wonderful chapter upon the trial by fire. We starve with the city in its misfortunes, and rejoice in its success; we see the people of the frescos, and we hear the bells of Florence.

Every visitor to Italy carries away at least a general impression of Florence. It is an impression of brown old stone, of narrow streets, of enormously wide eaves, as if the palaces were shading their window-eyes from the dazzling light; of sidewalkless streets, with polygonal blocks of pavement, like an Etruscan wall laid flat; of fortifications and battlements, seen overhead; of massive gratings at windows that show the pediments of the Renaissance; of still heavier ones, at those of the Gothic times; of escutcheons at palace-angles; of projections corbelled out, throwing deep shadows, and suggesting machicolations through which were dropped stones and beams in the days of street-battle; of shrines at corners, glassed and dusty now, but out of which the long-eyed saints of the fourteenth century look, wondering that the war-cries are gone and that only the street-cries remain, while often and again, in semicircle of white and blue, Madonna with the baby, "ringed by a bowery flowery angel brood," smiles upon one, and says that if war is transitory beauty is immortal; of shadowed streets, and at some opening a burst of sunlit façade, of that checkered pattern, in black and white, so dear to mediæval Florentine eyes.

Above all, one carries away in his memory the image of those buildings which are the outgrowth of the city, her stamp and mark, inseparable from her as the Arno, and as familiar to the eyes of modern travel as was the lily on the florin to the merchants upon every mediæval 'change of Europe. They stand guard over the town like the stone saints at the doorway of a church: the cathedral, a huge Christopher, lifting the cross upon the greatest of all domes; the fair Campanile, like a Gabriel of the Annunciation, wearing the lily of Florence, and calling "Ave Maria" from its peal of bells; and the Palazzo Vecchio, the Michael of the city, bearing the shields of the republic, summoning the townsmen to arms, and giving voice to the will of the people. Then, too, there are San Giovanni, where the Florentines are baptized; and Santa Croce, where the great are buried; the square strength of the Bargello, and the slender Badia tower that rings the hour to the city.

All these make up Florence, and nearly all can be included within a small rectangle, bounded on the south by the river, and on the east by the Via dei Leoni and Via del Proconsolo, running from the Arno to the cathedral; the latter, with its vast length, and the baptistery to the west of it making a large part of the northern boundary, which is continued by the Via de' Cerretani to the western side, formed by the Via de' Rondinelli, Piazza degli Adimari, and Via Tornabuoni. Outside the rectangle historic quarters surround the great churches of Santa Croce, on the northeast; San Lorenzo, the Annunziata, and San Marco, on the north; and Santa Maria

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A Bit of the Mercato Vecchio.—Above, Arms of the Medici in the Corso degli Albizzi.

Novella, on the northwest. Besides these, there is that part of Oltrarno including the Via dei Bardi.

Within these limits, or nearly, the Story of Romola runs, and about this little space you may follow it, not in its details—since it returns frequently to the same places—but in its main lines. You may wake up with Tito under the Loggia de' Cerchi; and follow him to the Mercato, where he found the people anxiously commenting upon the death of Lorenzo de' Medici. The house of Ro-

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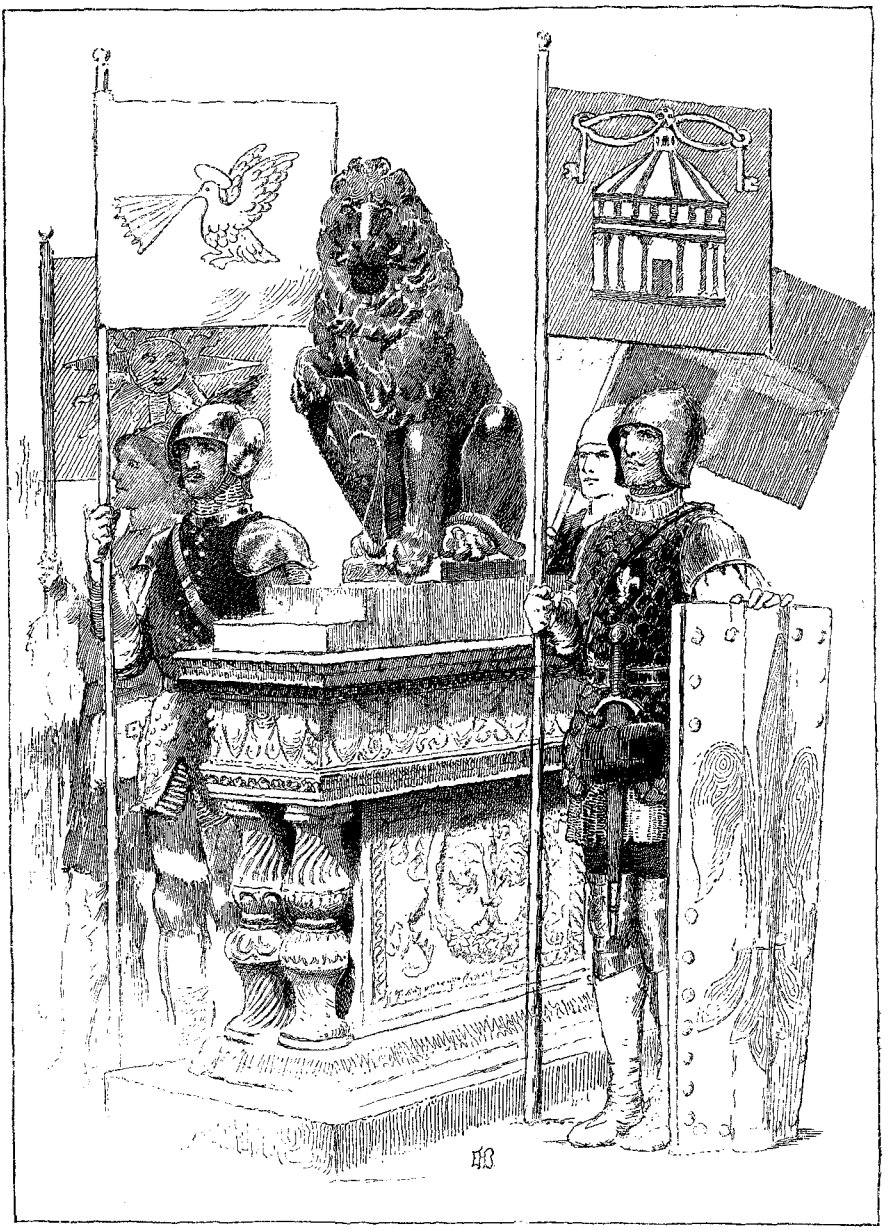
mola's father, in the Via dei Bardi, may epitomize the life of the scholar, the festival of the nativity of St. John give a glimpse of the artist; and with the scholar and the artist we have the great figures of the Renaissance—the human-



Marzocco, with the Arms of the Four Quarters of San Giovanni, Santo Spirito, Santa Croce, Santa Maria Novella.

ist who, from the heritage of antiquity, set forth again the inward worthiness and free agency of man, and the painter and sculptor who once more gave expression to his outward beauty. The scholars and artists of Florence may thus stand as sponsors for the Titos and Tessas, the Brattis and Nellos, and show us

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the palaces in which the people of "Romola" lived—the people themselves, as they were painted upon church-wall or carved on marble monuments. In the latter half of the story the interest and, with it, the train of characters converge upon the monastery of San Marco and the Piazza della Signoria, where the fortunes of the state work themselves out and the hopes of Romola are shattered. The monks of to-day, however shorn of their old importance, take us into famous churches—we may see the relics of Savonarola, and follow his footsteps to the great square of the Palazzo Vecchio, where the story ends.

After the noble prologue, the book opens upon Tito awakening to the inquiring eyes of Bratti, the ironmonger, from his sleep under the Loggia dei Cerchi. The loggia is gone; but its place was in the heart of the city, where the high houses crowd together, and where the memorial tablets to the great departed speak of many who had gone from Florence before Tito's time, and of many who came after him. It is a busy quarter of narrow streets, where the procession had to close its ranks, and where Guelph or Ghibelline found a short chain quite long enough to link house to house and stop the oncoming horse or foot of the enemy. A roaring quarter, where Dante heard the shouts of battle, and where Tito, had he listened, could have recognized the whole fugue of the arts of Florence, those famous *arti* major and minor—the shuttles of the woollen-makers, the chisels of the sculptors, the pounding of the metal-workers in the Ferravecchi street, the clicking hammers of the goldsmiths, and the cleavers of the butchers, their predecessors upon the Ponte Vecchio.

Only a few steps beyond the loggia lies the Mercato Vecchio, that famous square which is still picturesque and busy. The municipal broom has swept away the butchers' and poulterers' stalls, and much of that rather Augean market which old Pucci sang; and municipal prudence has housed in a museum the Robbia angels that used to shine whitely over all the blood and dirt and confusion.

The Goddess of Plenty only a few years ago still stood there, high on her column, a kind of Santa Barbara to the tower of Or San Michele. For in early times, when the microcosmic republic not only furnished manufactures to the world, but made its own bread to feed its own soldiers, the captains of Or San Michele mounted the tower yearly, and, looking out upon the fields, decided by their appearance what should be the current price of wheat. She is gone, column and all, but plenty still reigns below in the market—and what a place it is!—the wide rectangle, its centre unpaved; the houses, tall and short, crowded with windows; and below all, about three sides of the piazza, a noisy, smoking, unfragrant medley of shops; a constant push and shouting; a crossing of handcarts; a fizzing of spiders as the fat drips from *polenta*, browning nicely, and eaten hot; a crackling of charcoal under the chestnut braziers; open-air cooking of every sort and kind. If Tito, after his nap, had found but a *grosso* or so in his pocket, he would have taken pretty Tessa's kiss and cup of milk as dessert, and gone for his meal to one of those tempting *al-fresco* cook-shops, with its large, clear fire, its rows of neatly dressed fowls and joints turning on their spits, the hot cakes of chestnut-flour and crisp slices of *polenta* fizzling in their pans, and its brass platters and porringers, engraved with quaint old patterns, gleaming in the firelight. Here Tessa might find her *berlingozzi* to-day, or Baldassarre his bread and meat; and we may see their modern counterparts—shabby men in long cloaks and slouched felt hats, pretty girls in serge dresses and gay headkerchiefs—see them best of all after nightfall, when the brazier-fires seem to leap up higher and make wild Rembrandt effects upon the faces of Bersaglieri munching *polenta* under their waving cocks' feathers, or brown peasants looking curiously at the rude wood-cuts heading the penny ballads that line the walls. There is less "amateur fighting" on the square than in the old times, less filching from stalls, less gambling, for that is done decorously in the state lotteries. Of four churches at the angles, but two subsist, in dirty, crazy fragments; and, indeed, there is perhaps less work for the devil, whom St. Peter Martyr saw fly by, as he preached in the open-air pulpit still remaining. The devil re-

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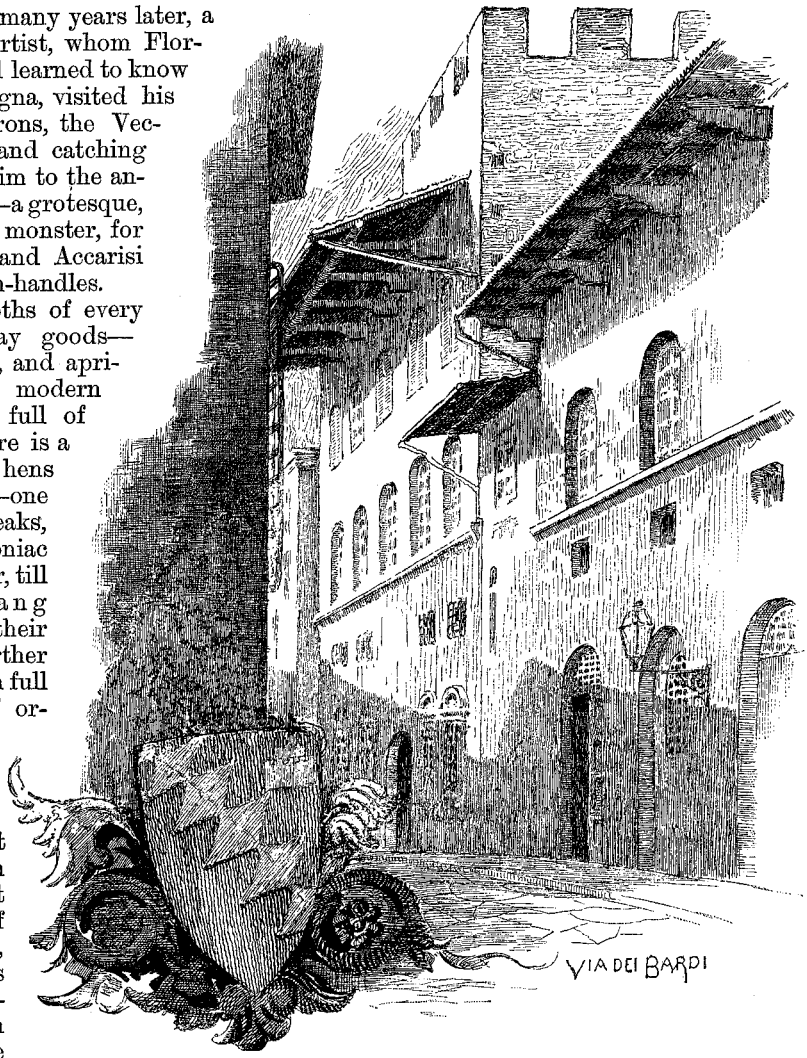

mains, too; for, many years later, a young French artist, whom Florentines afterward learned to know as John of Bologna, visited his friends and patrons, the Vecchietti, near by, and catching the devil, fixed him to the angle of the palace—a grotesque, decorative little monster, for tourists to visit and Accarisi to copy on spoon-handles.

There are booths of every sort, full of gay goods—shawls, red, blue, and apricot, the joy of modern Tessas; booths full of animals, too; here is a boy dragging hens from a basket—one squeak, two squeaks, a whole demoniac panpipe of terror, till half a dozen hang downward by their legs. A little farther on, the parrots, in full consciousness of ornamental security, are shrieking what we feel sure are scurrile taunts at the hens; upon the shop-front are scores of wicker cages, their canaries filling high soprano parts in the chorus of the Mercato; while the thrash of a machine, hidden somewhere, adds to the noise till the big bell of the Campanile booms a diapason. You find Bratti at home just beyond the bird-shop, where the street of the Ferravecchi bristles with old iron. There are chains, bits of harness, copper braziers in whole families of big and little; here and there among the metal are old musical instruments—battered fiddles, a flute or so—and slender, beautiful, verdigrised brass lamps.

The Medici lived hard by here, before they outgrew their house and set Michelozzo to work upon the palace of the Via Larga. Their noses were not nice—one might be of the Grandi, and yet like a leek, and rather enjoy the fish-market at the corner, whose loggia, with its arches, columns, and medallions, is a new-comer since the days of Bratti. And the Medici were not alone in the quarter—the Amieri were near them; and the Strozzi, surely as grandly housed as ever were private citizens, had built their huge palace here, with its back upon the "Onion Place," the Piazza dei Cipolli. Its bases are lined with the long stone seats so well known in Florence; so convenient for the sturdy constituents of the old nobles to stand upon of a *festa*, to see the procession go by, to sit on of week-

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days, selling their onions and their spring flowers side by side.

Not far from the Mercato, in the Calimara, was the shop of Burchiello, that Renaissance Figaro of Florence, antecedent to the delightful character of Nello, the barber. It was Nello's shop that next received Tito and the story, and Tito looked out over the barber's saucer and apron at nearly what we see to-day. Some changes there have been, for Florence has worked hard at the façade of her cathedral, unveiling it this year:—some changes, but not many. The stone of Dante has been piously built into the wall, while Lapo and Brunelleschi are put on either side of it to watch their work. But the fair tower is the same; "*il mio bel San Giovanni*" is *bello* still, even beside its later and greater rival. The mighty dome rises as grand as when Michael Angelo, his horse's head turned toward Rome, looked back at it from the hills, and avowed that he could do no better—grand under the sunlight, under the starlight; grand when, on some high festival, covered with lighted lamps, it sits like a jewelled mitre upon the city; grandest of all, perhaps, under the Italian moon.

It was from the shop of Nello that Tito went with his Figaro patron to the house of old Bardo, in Oltrarno.

The Via dei Bardi is still one of the most characteristic parts of the city. The houses of the Bardi are gone, but many such of the early times, those which must have immediately taken their place, remain. Among the frowning streets of Florence it is one of the sternest—chill and wind-swept; a long fortress, easily defended at its ends in the days when the great family, unaided, could send from its houses pikemen to hold the chain barricades of the Ponte Vecchio and the Piazza Mozzi; cross-bowmen to send their bolts whizzing from back windows into the enemy upon the bridges; artillerymen to work the mangonels upon the tower-tops—to fling great stones over Santa Felicità and up the Borgo San Jacopo, or even across the river to the heart of the republican city, the square of the Palazzo Vecchio. Not only could they furnish all these, and officer them with sons and brothers and cousins, but they had their allies, too. There were the Rossi, by the little church of Santa Felicità; and the Frescobaldi, to hold the bridge of the most holy Trinity. The bridge of the Frescobaldi has gone down in ruin before floods fiercer than these faction struggles, and has been replaced by the graceful arches of Ammanati; but the Ponte Vecchio, which saw the gonfalons of the quarters—the dove and the sun, the baptistery and the cross—beaten back by the Bardi, but finally triumphant, stands the same as ever, and says as steadfastly, "*Gaddi mi fece, il ponte Vecchio sono,*" as in the days when the great Taddeo set its buttresses against the current. To-day there are parts of the Via dei Bardi where one may stand and not see, within the gentle curve that bounds the vision, a single stone which tells of modern times, or anything but arched windows, jealous gratings, and thick oak doors, heavy with the mass of spikes that stud them—a stern, forbidding street, but with the beauty of dignity, simplicity, and strength. There is little traffic there now; occasionally some fine carriage wakens the echoes of the deep archways as it goes by to the palace of the Capponi, whose name, great as that of the Bardi, illustrates the place still. The street which was "the filthy," the Via Pidigliosa, before the nobles built their palaces there, can never be even commonplace again. And, stern as it is, romance looks down on one from the loggia whence Dianora dei Bardi saw and claimed her husband as they led him to execution, saving his life and the honor of the Buondelmonti;—the story is all in the chroniclers. Robbia's Madonna, too, blossoms like a flower among the dark palaces, above the door of little Santa Lucia—the church in which Romola would have been married had not blind Bardo's memories and anticipations beckoned him to Santa Croce, where he had been wedded, and where he hoped to lie buried.

Midway of the Via dei Bardi a path leads sharply to the right, up the hill of San Giorgio, where Tessa lived, and finally to the mediæval gate, with its frescos and its sculptured St. George. Beyond it opens the pleasant country; and at the side is the fortress where, in blue woollen and lacquer and pipe-clay, some thousand defenders of the modern

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Tessas of Florence may be seen. From the crashing palaces of the Oltrarno nobles, the cross-bolts and hurtling-stones of the battle of the bridges, to the wordy combats, the poison-tipped epigrams, the ponderously flung Latin taunts of the humanists, is as far as from the early fourteenth to the late fifteenth century; but topographically it is no farther than a ten minutes' walk from the Via dei Bardi to the palace of the Gherardeschi, in the Borgo Pinti, where a tablet to

Bartolommeo Scala reminds us less of the secretary of the republic than of the scene of the *culex* in "Romola," the suggestion of his quarrels with Politian.

It is, however, in the house of Romola's father that we are really made to participate in the enthusiasms of the man of letters. Bardo dei Bardi, the blind old scholar, the collector of books and antiquities, the compiler and copyist of manuscripts, is a familiar figure in the Italy of the fifteenth century, the age of learning.

When Bardo planned the great work that he and Tito were to write together, the first epoch of humanism, that of discovery, had passed away, and the second, that of compilation, had begun. In both Florence had been in the vanguard. She had welcomed the Greek professors from Byzantium, who came rouged and painted, and clad in stiff, hieratic robes, like the saints who stare down in mosaic from the walls of Ravenna. She had her own noble army of scholars—Boccaccio, Petrarch,

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Costumes of the Fifteenth Century Ladies, with Bardi Chapel in Santa Croce, where Romola was Married.

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whose mother was born in this Via dei Bardi; Poggio Fiorentino, who ransacked the transalpine monasteries for books and found many an old Pagan author masquerading under frock and cowl; and others, too, who might say with Ciriaco, "I go to awaken the dead." And the dead was awakened. Antiquity rose to life again, wearing a strange garb and with her simple white chiton pieced with bits of mediæval motley, and bespangled with Byzantine tinsel; speaking a strange jargon of corrupt Greek and barbarous Latin;—but ragged and stammering as she was, there was so much human dignity and so much divine beauty about her, that no sooner was she seen than the new Helena won the heart of the mediæval student. A very Helena she was at first, seen dimly, as in a magic mirror; mute or capricious to those who sought most earnestly to learn her secrets; prone to evil, with a "feather-headed" moral lightness that frightened the devout,—or so she seemed, in the dim light of the convent-library; but when brought into the Italian sunshine, the daylight of market-place and lecture-room, she lost this mysterious glamour, and gained in the losing.

All Florence welcomed her. The shop-keeping republic patronized learning as generously as king or pope—professors' chairs were endowed, libraries founded, and famous scholars employed as ambassadors and secretaries. In Florence, scholarship was not a mere ornamental fringe to the sober garment of daily duties; it was warp and woof of that garment, a part of life itself. Young girls, busy merchants, men of pleasure, captains of adventure, women of fashion, shared the enthusiasm for learning; and it is difficult nowadays to realize how important the scholar's place became under such conditions. Women had their part in this feast of reason; Romola's education by Chalcondilas, her familiarity with Latin and Greek authors was not uncommon. Italy abounded in learned ladies—princesses like Hippolita Sforza or Battista Montefeltro, who addressed Latin orations to popes and emperors; noble women who, like Cecilia Gonzaga, wrote Greek beautifully; female professors who filled many of the chairs of the Bolognese university; burghers' daughters, like Alessandra Scala, to whom Politian and Marullus paid court, and that Cassandra Fedeli, to whom Romola intended to apply when she left Florence after Tito's first treason. For humanism was not only an accomplishment, it was a career; in order to follow an ordinary conversation a certain modicum of culture was required, and a woman was obliged at least to read—the result being a certain robustness of intellect, which is so strong an element in Romola's character.

Save in his generous temper, Bardo is a typical scholar, with the maxims of the Enchiridion on his lips, and an intense craving for fame in his heart; too proud to cringe and flatter, too noble to fawn for patronage and to pay its heavy price, and yet not proud enough to disdain what others gained through the sacrifice of their independence, and too often of their self-respect. But Bardo's wish that through his collections his name should be known and honored was not unreasonable in an age that reverenced the tomb of Petrarch like that of a saint, that preserved the study of Accursius as though it were holy ground, and in which some enthusiast, taking the lamp from below the crucifix and placing it before a bust of Dante, exclaimed, "Take it, thou art more worthy of it than the crucified!"

Modern Italy is just at present quite too busy with financial and economic problems to be enthusiastic about literature; but we can still hear lectures on Dante in the Florentine Collegio Reale, and see students almost as picturesquely cloaked as in the old days when Boccaccio discoursed in San Stefano on the same subject; and a few years ago a lineal descendant of the great scholars might be seen in the person of the Marchese Gino Capponi, author of the well-known history of Florence.

From the scholars' library, in which antiquity was diligently studied in manuscript and inscription, the story leads Tito to one of those street-processions which, partly religious, partly civic, were also largely, in their costume and arrangement, the outcome of these very excursions into the ancient authors; and no picture of Italian life in the fifteenth century would have been complete with-

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out the suggestion which George Eliot gives of the festival of St. John's nativity. He is a famous saint in Florence, and his is the oldest church—the Baptistery—already old in the thirteenth century, when Arnolfo covered it with the black-and-white pattern which we see there now, and which must have been still tolerably fresh when Nello's barber-shop stood near it. Neither the wide interior of the Duomo nor the many-chapelled Santa Croce is as solemn as the incense-filled space of San Giovanni, whose domed ceiling, as the eyes strain through the darkness, gradually grows populous with a multitude, amidst which the face of the colossal Christ looks out and seems to vibrate upon the colored gloom.

The popularity of pageants in the streets and churches was enormous. After the Allegories of Dante, the Triumphs of Love and Fame and Chastity of Petrarch, the greatest artists could not disdain the setting, and even the stage-carpentry, of the pompous ballet-spectacles in which kings of Scripture, heroes of antiquity, the virtues and vices, elements and attributes, marched and countermarched through the cities of Italy. In the mysteries of the North the missal borders of the Middle Ages had come to life, with all their soldiers and saints, their devils and dragons; but the Italians, that people of artists, added the myths of classical antiquity, and interwove their Bible with Ovid. Brunelleschi set his copper spheres a-whirling, and invented his heaven of angels dancing in concentric rings, his Gabriel lowered by pulleys from a star. Piero di Cosimo was famous for his arrangement of processions. Donatello built his colossal wooden horse for Padua, and Leonardo da Vinci superintended the festivals at Milan.

There were doubtless many absurdities in these processions. But we may be sure that the pictures were fine when Brunelleschi and Da Vinci stood by; and if the painters costumed and set the spectacles, the spectacles reacted upon their own art. Imagine how ardently Mantegna and Filippo Lippi would have worked at the costuming of a procession; how Filippino would have expended upon it the vivid fancy which Vasari tells us of, and which he showed in the curiously devised trophies, standards, and pseudo-Roman architecture of the Strozzi chapel in Santa Maria Novella. If Ghirlandajo looked hard at the Florentines when about their daily avocations, Sandro Botticelli was all eyes as the car of the virtues passed; and we can well believe that the pretty girls of the city vied with each other to be chosen for this or that personification. We see the sublimated reflection of these spectacles on many a canvas or bass-relief of the fifteenth century—in Botticelli's exquisite "Primavera," in Mantegna's "Triumph of Cæsar" at Hampton Court, in the singing groups of Della Robbia, the intertwined boys of the pulpit at Prato, and the panels, pilasters, and friezes of the Renaissance. So great was the passion for spectacles that Savonarola was forced to adapt it to the uses of his theocracy; and in speaking to the multitude, from the pulpit of the Duomo, he clothed his vision of Christ in the forms which the people had seen and understood in the processions and pageants of the streets. Perhaps, too, the great monk never entirely forgot the days when he laid down the lute in his native Ferrara, the city of festivals.

The private palaces of Florence are as characteristic as its public buildings. They are the outcome of civil strife, and through all the elegance of the Renaissance appears the fortress. Within the windows are the gratings that made scaling-ladders useless; below are doors which little save fire or a battering-ram could force; above is the loggia, raised upon the house-top, beyond the chances of street-battle. They are such houses as the one Romola lived in; without they suggest the fortress, and within they smack of the cloister, with their long passages, tiled floors, frequent stairs, and wide, frescoed wall-spaces. The vast rooms contain little furniture, but each piece is a work of art.

The tall towers are gone from the private palaces. A fiat, issuing like a mediæval Tarquin from the Signoria, lopped them to an even level in the thirteenth century; but the escutcheon, carved by some famous artist, still advertises the nobility of the former owner, who is often seen within, kneeling to Madonna upon

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Mandolins Passing San Giovanni.

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a gold ground, his palms joined, his subtle Florentine profile upturned with reverential if somewhat proprietary interest. In the Borgo degli Albizzi the palaces stand shoulder to shoulder—Neri and Pazzi, Alessandri and Quaratesi; for half the streets of Florence are named for the great families. They have held history and romance—tragedies of blows in the earlier centuries, of poison in the later,—and have sheltered the kindly family life Pandolfini tells of in his "Del Governo."

The famous families of Florence were long-lived. To-day in the Martelli palace you visit the statues which Donatello gave to a Martelli of the fifteenth century; it is by the courtesy of a Buonarotti that the relics in the house of Michael Angelo are shown; the Strozzi, the Pazzi, and many others are seen daily about the streets of the city; and in Santa Croce the tomb of a Capponi—a Gino Capponi, like his great ancestor—is white and shining in the marble of a recent date.

The finest palace streets of Florence are the Borgo degli Albizzi and the Via Tornabuoni. The Borgo almost retains its old appearance; but the Tornabuoni has been given up to the foreigner, especially to the English or American visitor. Thither he goes for his letters and his money; there he reads the papers at Vieusseux's, or loiters in Doney's café; there in the shadow of the stern-looking palace, designed by Michael Angelo, he may buy photographs of everything, big or little, in Florence; there the tourists sit and study their guide-books, in Baccio d'Agnolo's windows of the Hôtel du Nord. It is the oddest mixture in the city, of the old and the new. There in front of the huge Strozzi, and opposite the flower-market, at Giacosa's, the American and English girls eat candy or sweets, according to their nationality; or just beyond, under Alfieri's house, look into the windows of the jewellers' shops, discussing whether the devil of the Mercato Vecchio or the St. George of Donatello is better upon a spoon-handle, whether a bearded head or an athlete will please the longer upon an intaglio or cameo, whether photographs are better mounted upon tinted paper or white—in fact, discussing the thousand delightful trifles of foreign travel, and of present-buying for those at home. Not a few Americans have had close acquaintance with the very house in which George Eliot passed the days when she was acquiring that exact knowledge of Florentine topography which helps to make her book so real. The house was the villa of Mr. Thomas Adolphus Trollope, and stood well out in the country; but since then Florence has grown—it is now within the city, and has become a pension. It is still a privilege to remember it as it once was, with its wealth of carving and Venetian glass, and its wonderful oak-floored and leather-covered library, where the genial old author proudly dragged from his shelves folio after folio of the early Florentine historians, manuscript and black-letter, and showed them by the light of a great stained-glass casement, which filled the whole end of the room, and framed Fiesole, with its rocks, its olives, and its towers.

If the palaces of the old Florentines are to be found on all sides, so, too, their ancient inhabitants stand ready to receive us, if we will but go to them. Thanks to the painters, the costume of the end of the fifteenth century can be reconstructed, even to its smallest details; and we know just how Tito looked when he thrust his thumbs into his belt or cast the *becchetto* over his left shoulder; and can find all Brigida's finery, from her pearl-embroidered cap to her coral rosary, in many a blackened picture. For, even if costume was idealized and ennobled by the artists under the influence of classical antiquity, the innumerable portraits of the time represent it as it was worn in daily life. The young Florentines might clothe themselves in Mantegna's or Gozzoli's draperies for a May-day festival or procession, but when they sat to Ghirlandajo or Botticelli for their portraits they wore the mantle and kirtle or the doublet and hose of the latest mode.

The most marked characteristics of this costume are simplicity of line, unity of color, and sobriety of ornament. Florentine elegance always had a touch of severity. The silk brocades made in the town, and sent to France and England, were seldom seen at home. Except

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A Florentine Loggia, Via del Proconsolo, and Fifteenth Century Florentine Headdress.

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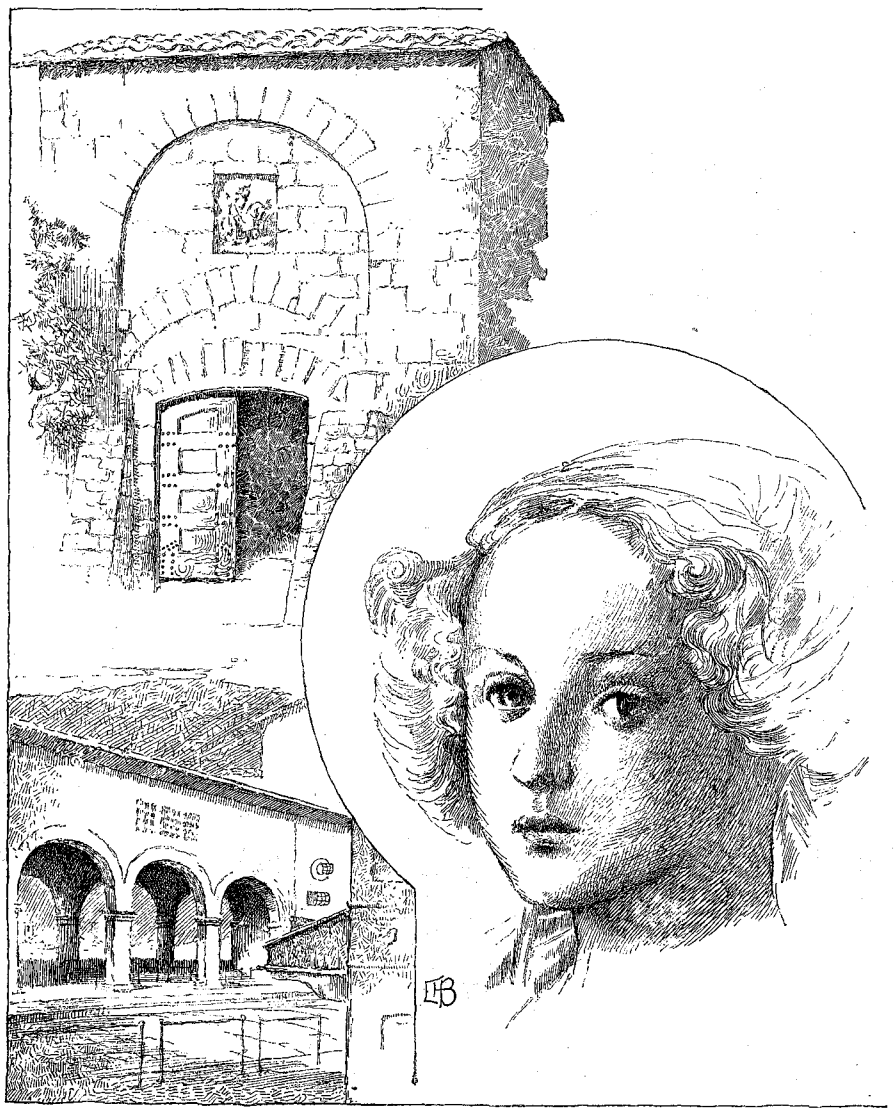

A Type for Tessa, taken from Filippo Lippi.—Above, Gate of San Giorgio near which Tessa lived.

on festival days the Florentines wore their own woollen stuffs, from the shops of the Calimara. The general form of these garments is familiar to us all—the fine-linen underwear, showing at wrist and throat, or pulled through the slashes at elbow and shoulder. For the young men, the long hose, fastened by points at the waist to the tight-fitting jerkin; the loose doublet, falling half-way to the knee; the ample cloak, still worn in Florence; the tiny red cap, crowning a mass of fuzzy curls. For the girls there were the close-fitting gowns, that revealed every line of the body; the flowing over-robe, shaped like a Greek tunic, sometimes girdled in antique fashion; a chaplet of goldsmiths' work or a net of pearls, to confine the long hair. For the elder folk there was the stately *lucco*, that fell in unbroken folds from neck to ankle; the great mantle, lined with furs or velvet; the *barret*, with its hanging scarf, ample protection against the sharp

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Some Costumes of the Time of Romola, and Great Hall of the Bargello.

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tramontana or the hot sun; grand gowns of rich, heavy stuffs; and all sorts of head- and neck-gear, from the transparent gauzes of Fra Lippo's pictures to the thick veils of the Del Sarto Madonnas, all most becoming to elderly faces.

In Italy the old canons of proportion were never quite forgotten. The waist and hips were never compressed, and the head was dressed so as to appear relatively small. The huge head-dresses, the towering horns and peaks, so popular in England and Germany, the pinched waist and squeezed hips of the French *damoiselle* and *châtelaine*, never found favor in Italy. The mantle, the cloak, the flowing veil were essential parts of an Italian toilet of any epoch, and even in the eighteenth century Venetian women could still be majestic even in hoops and panniers.

Toward the end of the fifteenth century the study of antique sculpture, the influence of the artists, the newly awakened sense of æsthetic criticism, began to find expression in costume. The proportions of the human body, the beauty of its movements, the elegance of its natural lines, were again felt, after many centuries, and since the days of *peplos* and *himation* they had not been more fully expressed. Beautiful as the garments of ancient Greece were, the Florentines were too truly artistic, too thoroughly imbued with the principles of style, to endeavor to imitate them. No doubt artists and patrons looked upon antique drapery as an ideal, but as something quite unsuited to modern conditions, to a cold climate, to the activity of burgher life.

But the youths' doublet and hose, the girls' tight-fitting, square-cut bodice, followed the lines of their young bodies; and the older people wore the long folds and ample draperies that lend grace and dignity to the most uncomely. On the practical character of these costumes—their fitness, their style, in a word—we need not insist. They were as fine in detail as in line. Here, as in every other aspect of Renaissance life, there was much personality; ornament was individual; seals, emblems, arms, devices, the blazons of mediæval heraldry were still in the immediate past, and to them the artists lent beauty as well. So the girl's favorite flower blossomed, unfading, in her silver garland; the scholar's pet maxim, from Seneca or Cicero, was embroidered on his pouch or graven on a medallion. Such charming trifles lent grace and originality to the simplest dress.

The burgher's suit of plain cloth could not fail of distinction when the medal in his cap was wrought by Pisanello or Finiguerra, its device penned by Politian, and the seal-ring on his finger cut by some famous *intagliatore*, ancient or modern. There were fewer silks and velvets in the brown town than in Venice or Milan. A Florentine never loved a silk *simarre* or a pearl necklace as he did a fine cameo or a good bit of goldsmiths' work, but of the latter he showed a generous appreciation. On the girdle, the pouch-clasp, the dagger-hilt, the garland, cunning workmanship and artistic fancy were lavished. Pretty things were not made by the gross then, and each was a separate creation of the artist. The shops of Cennini, the Ghirlandaji, and the Pollajuoli were full of young students capable of giving shape to any number of dainty conceits in gold, silver, or *niello*. The art or trade of the goldsmith was most honorable; it counted among its members the greatest of Florentine artists. Was not Bigordi always the garland-maker, and did not Brunelleschi set jewels before he set the great jewel on the walls of Santa Maria? We can find Tito's dagger, and Romola's golden girdle, and Tessa's silver necklace and clasp, under glass in some museum, and we can see Tito's mail-shirt in the armory of the Bargello; but time, more cruel than Savonarola's bonfire, has devoured most of our actors' properties, and only bits and shreds would remain to us if the painters, the Florentine "fifth element," had not preserved them for us—and they show us not only the costumes, but the actors themselves. At this time the artists were passing through the realistic phase of their art; had abandoned the well-ordered, symmetrically arranged heaven and hell of the Giotteschi, and were carving and painting men and things as they saw them in the every-day world about them. With their help it is an easy task to evoke the past—every palace becomes haunted; every street crowd-

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The Choir Boys of Savonarola.

ed with familiar figures ; at every corner we meet some well-known face—the old Florentines return to their old places. The most indifferent traveller cannot help seeing them, be he ever so blind.

If we take some of these characters of "Romola," and look for their counter-

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parts in another art, with a little patience we shall find them all. Ghirlandajo will show us many of them—he who, if he did not paint the walls of Florence, as he wished, portrayed the world that moved within those walls. In the choir of Santa Maria Novella the artist painted the stories of the blessed Virgin and St. John the Baptist; but he has taken his pictures from contemporary life; he has painted his friends and neighbors, not idealized into cold abstractions, but real men and women, with keen, subtle faces, acute and critical, but not unkindly, sharpened by shop-keeping and the *tramontana*, but ennobled by wide culture, and capable of kindling into enthusiasm. Many of them are ugly in line and modelling, with an occasional quite abnormal development of cheeks and chin, bony and flaccid at once. But intellect can do much to beautify the most ill-favored. Each of these figures is a definite personality, clearly and distinctly marked, invaluable to the student of history, with no softening of lines or angles—a portrait straight from life. Here we are face to face with the old Florentines.

On the right is a group of humanists—Politian, "whose juvenile ugliness was not less signal than his precocious scholarship;" Marsilio Ficino, brought up as a Platonist from his cradle, "and whose mind was, perhaps, a little pulpy from that too exclusive diet," both spare and small, with pale faces; Cristoforo Landino, white-haired and worn, in black gown and *barret*. Behind them, among a group of grave, gray-haired men, is a figure handsome and majestic enough for Romola's god-father, Bernardo del Nero. On the panel directly opposite is Tito, known in Florence as *Il Bello*, in dark mantle and red cap, looking at us over his shoulder, out of long, brown eyes; here, too—a genuine portrait—is the massive strength of Niccolò Caparra. On the left a dark, bald man, in a plain russet suit, suggests Baldassarre, and one shrewd face, with a humorous twinkle in the keen eyes, must be Nello's; while near by is another actor in our drama—young Lorenzo Tornabuoni, then in the Medicean bank.

For the peasants and some of the older folk, pretty Tessa, meek, deaf Monna Lisa, bargaining Bratti, and silly Brigida, we must go to Fra Filippo Lippi, who was not afraid to paint very commonplace sinners as saints, little rustics as Madonnas, and the street-urchins of Florence as boy-angels and blessed *bambini*.

In the Bargello we find the strange head of Charles VIII., ugliest of knight-errants, and the bust of Macchiavelli, no longer the witty young secretary of the republic, but the saturnine author of "The Prince," worn and embittered by poverty, disappointment, and the sad necessity of serving those "Signori Medici."

In the cloister of the Badia is the tomb of Francesco Valori, the fiery partisan of Savonarola—a plain sarcophagus, surmounted by a bust; the massive features and long, straight hair remind one of those Puritans and Covenanters with whom the Piagnone had much in common. Little Lillo and Ninna, and Savonarola's white-robed, olive-crowned *angiolini*, we see again and again; for the beauty of babyhood was first discovered and translated into form by the artists of the Renaissance. The portraits of Savonarola are too well known to every tourist to require note or comment. One never tries to find Romola herself; we see her, as did her blind old father, only as something vague and shining.

The November holiday of 1494, with its ugly ending for Tito, sent him to Niccolò Caparra to buy his mail-shirt, "the garment of fear." There is a restaurant now at Niccolò's street-corner, but under a house massive and picturesque enough to justify the tablet to the memory of the old armor-maker. Tito found Caparra forging spear-heads; and soon after, his prophetic anticipation was justified by the entrance of Charles VIII. of France, whose short occupation of Florence enabled Tito to sell the library, betray the sacred trust of Bardo, and alienate Romola.

The long hall of the Medici, now Riccardi palace, upon the Via Cavour, in which Capponi tore the treaty—saying, "Then if you blow your trumpets, we will ring our bells"—is greatly changed, and suggests the flute and violin, not the trumpet. There are rows of mirrors in rococo frames with Cupids painted on them, and the long-arched ceiling has

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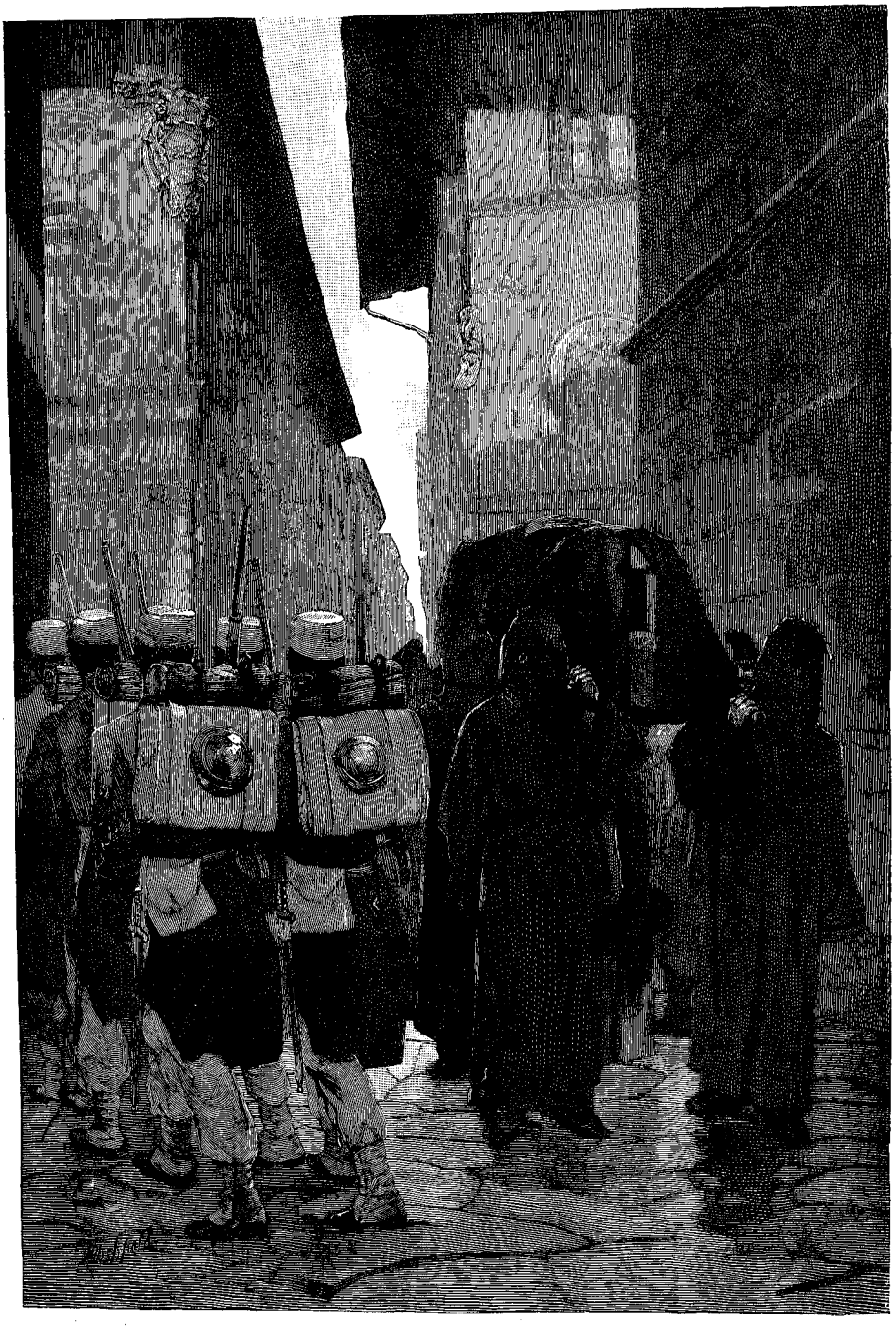

A Picturesque Meeting; the Compagnia della Misericordia.

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been splashed by Luca fa Presto with a whole regiment of gods and goddesses. Not far from the palace is the gorgeous church of the Santissima Annunziata, between whose square and the hill of San Giorgio, Tessa, in the intervals of her many naps, played her poor little rôle. There the lamps, which swing in a constellation of gold and silver, yield a "yellow splendor in itself something supernatural and heavenly to the peasant-women"—a heaven of gilding and light, and rich colors and sounds surrounds them; at once their drama, their picture-gallery, and their church; an epitome of their hopes and fears, and the vague wonder which is their nearest approach to an appreciation of the beautiful. The lamps have been wonderful to thousands of Tessas since the evening she brought her cocoons there and, kneeling, looked at the handsome St. Michael and thought of Tito. To-day you may see peasant-women, sad-faced and worn, as naïve and simple and dull as Tessa, if not as pretty, passing under the often-proclaimed *Guibbileo* of its doors, kissing the silver altar-front again and again, and bowing to the dark face of Andrea's Christ, looking out from the splendor. Tessa is perhaps the only character in the book who is the same to-day as in the fifteenth century. Outward events make no impression upon a mind too shallow to take account of them; and the little Tuscan model from some *castello* of the surrounding hills, who sits to-day for the Florentine artist, is as little affected by the facts of United Italy and Roma Capitale as was Tessa by the entrance of the French or the war with Pisa.

The story takes us onward to the Medicean plotters in the Rucellai gardens, and *their* world is changed indeed. The gardens are beautiful still, with ilex and cypress and olive, but conspiracy with epigram and lute and critical admiration of antique gems, diplomacy which conferred its highest honors upon the orator's Latinity, are as far removed from us as the peacock roasted in its feathers.

After Tito foils the attempt of his foster-father in the gardens, he is counterfoiled in turn by Romola in his own attempt to deliver Savonarola into the hands of Dolfo Spini. For a time the reformer is still in the ascendent, and we have the charming pictures of the "angelic boys," whose descent upon Tessa, and temporary conversion of Monna Brigida, brighten the latter part of the story. But tragedy soon meets us again in the Bargello.

Nowhere in Florence is the contrast between the past and the present more marked than in the Bargello, that older brother of the Palazzo Vecchio; once a place of punishment and torture, the head-quarters of the *podestà*, or military governor of the city. Grim memories cling about its massive walls—it has stood sieges, held patriots and traitors, sheltered tyrants, and seen blood flow in execution, massacre, and revolt; stone cells line the court and lead out of the great halls; in the council-chamber, now an armory, is the trap-door of the ancient *oubliette*, once filled with human bones; and the scaffold stood in the centre of the famous court, which has been little changed since Romola climbed the lion-guarded staircase to look her last upon her god-father. Kindly time has washed away the blood-stains, and the painted traitors, hanging head downward from its walls; the stone escutcheons and lambrequined helmets of the old *podestàs*, still remain; but instead of the agonized crowd that then filled the loggia, there is now a row of church-bells, graven with words of peace and blessing; in the chambers where the torturer handled his tools, Robbia's Madonnas smile upon us; and in the chapel, where the condemned received the last sacraments, Florence found her poet—a young Dante, unimbittered by exile. Only the armory on the ground floor and Pollaiuolo's condottieri recall the sterner uses of the grand old palace.

The monks of Florence, whose predecessors bore the statue of the Impruneta, and opposed or supported Savonarola, have fallen upon evil days; but they nurse their antique glories, and still go, picturesque figures, about the streets. Once their churches were so many ecclesiastical strongholds, each brotherhood proud of its traditions and names—the Dominicans of Santa Maria Novella boasting their Madonna of Cimabue and their frescos of Ghirlandajo; the Augustinians of Santo Spirito, proud of their culture; the Carmelites, of their

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famous brother, Filippo Lippi, and their Brancacci chapel, that artistic sanctuary of the Renaissance where Michael Angelo and Raphael looked and learned; the Dominicans of San Marco pointing to their angelic brother, and to Fra Bartolommeo; the Franciscans, proud of their poverty and of their magnificent church;—and all prouder still of their importance in the ecclesiastical body, their relics, and their places in the processions of the town. To-day their pride has passed away; and even their proprietary interest in their art-treasures is sadly diminished. San Marco has gone forever from its monks, and the tourist pays his franc to see the Angelicos and visit the cell of the great reformer. Santa Croce is to be secularized as a Pantheon to the dead Florentines; the Carmine is but a parish church. But at least their frescos all remain *in situ*, and cannot easily be dragged from their places to a gallery—a fortunate circumstance.

The brothers of the friars' churches are more interesting than the priests of the parochial ones; particularly those of Santa Maria Novella, which has kept some of its monks and all of its art-treasures. The mantle of St. Dominic has descended but lightly upon the shoulders of these good fellows, and even his sombre souvenir cannot darken their smiling faces. The memories of Savonarola, of the saintly Bishop Antonino's works of mercy, and of the angelic monk of Fiesole have come between. There is little of Fra Angelico's poetry in them; but they are gentle and kind to the poor, and a namesake of the saint-bishop Fra Antonino, under his black hood over the white mantle, was a really startling reminder of the greatest man of his great order—a coincidence to watch and study, with the beetling brows, the deep-set, bright eyes, the thick nose, full lips, and heavy jaw of Savonarola in Bartolommeo's portrait—the fierce frown and sweet smile the chroniclers tell us of. We were bidden by him to be quite at home, and paint at ease, with the assurance that nobody was disturbed. The sacristy was a little church-world, and gradually one learned to take an intelligent interest in it. Peasants and city-poor entered, for consolation in heavy sorrow, and for the smallest gossip of daily life. On some days there came a mighty shuffling, echoing along the passages, and a flood of the personally conducted burst into sight, inundating everything till one seized the canvas by its top and the easel by its legs to preserve them; while the tourists climbed steps, read their books, studied the backs of monuments,—for the recondite always appealed to them—and formed their ideas to quick music. A sketch was always tempting to them; and just as on the stage they would have applauded a real lamp-post or a real horse-car, so a live artist at work was for the nonce more absorbing than the pictures of a dead one. They had little time, how-

Fra Antonino, the Dominican,—a Souvenir of Savonarola

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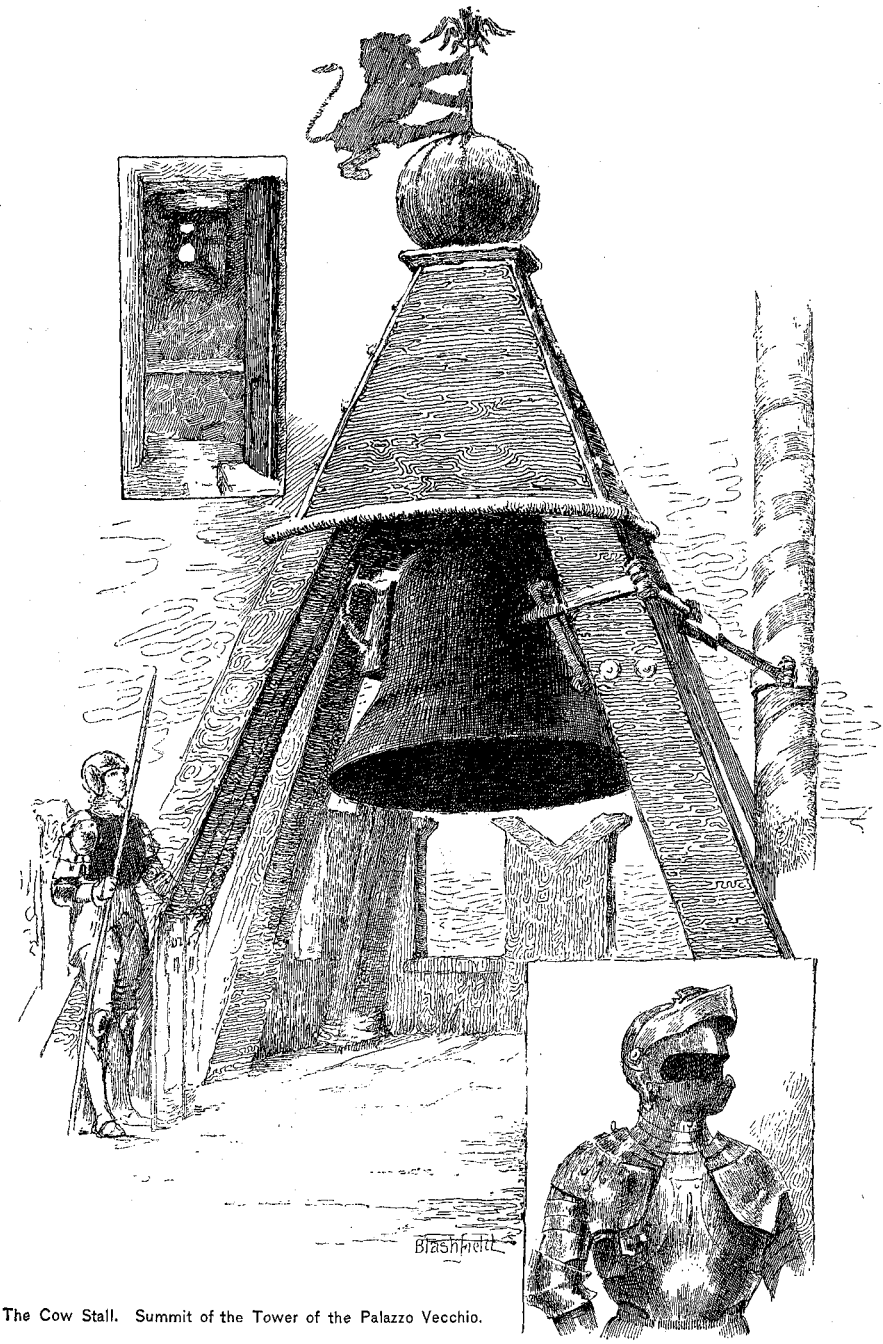

The Cow Stall. Summit of the Tower of the Palazzo Vecchio.

ever, to look, for they were involuntary impressionists, and were hurried away by their leader. These caravans were always noisy and hurried; and no wonder, for a conductor who is at once dictionary, time-table, mentor, friend, and whipper-in of stray couples, must be a tired and a worried person.

The brothers divided the duty of *cicerone* cleverly. Fra Giovanni, a stout,

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handsome monk, evidently their best spokesman, explained their Ghirlandaji; for they are a more complicated people than the other frescoed ones, because their names are often known and may be catalogued to the visitor, not only in the anticipation of *buona mano*, but

bella, Luca della Robbia." The Robbia fountain was beautiful indeed, and it was a pleasure to see this noble art-work taking its part in the daily uses of life, as the brothers often and again washed their hands or rinsed their *fiaschi* in it, nowise fearing the injunction running

Door of Chapter House in the Convent of San Marco, where Savonarola received Romola.

with real, corporate pride. "We have not such Giotti as has Santa Croce," said he, one day, "but our Gaddi and Memmi are unequalled in the world, and as for our Ghirlandaji"— here he interrupted himself to jingle two keys at some distant tourists, and call to them, in a sort of subdued shout, "Do the gentlemen wish to visit the Spanish chapel?" Brother —— (his name has escaped our memories) could show the other chapels; and anyone who happened to be near, in frock or out of it, monk or bell-ringer, would cheerfully and unasked fling a bit of information to any foreigner who happened to approach the object named. "*Terra invetriata, molto* beneath the Madonna across the marble, —"Take heed that thy hands be pure if thou washest here." Service after service passed out of the little sacristy as we sat there, and the bell took on a solemn sound for us when we learned that it ushered forth the *viaticum* upon its frequent errand to the sick and dying.

During another visit to Florence, two years later, we saw Brother Antonino again, and he sat for a study of his head. He looked as much like Savonarola as ever, but "the pleasant lust of arrogance" in the great reformer was softened in him into a gentle complacency that artists should wish to paint him.

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To the remark, "So you are still at Santa Maria Novella," he replied, "I shall die here." Let us hope so; it would be a pity that the church should be secularized, that the "Sposa" of Michael Angelo should have her nun's veil taken from her, and should exchange her cowled brothers for the blue-coated guardians of a government museum.

In the latter half of "Romola" the episodical groupings of various characters, whose dialogue is framed by the mercato or the loggia or the shop, are replaced by the continuous dramatic interest. The fate of Romola herself is interwoven with the fate of the republic, and the background of the story becomes the history of Florence. We follow the heroine upon an upward current of suffering as she loses, successively, husband, godfather, and teacher; and upon the same current the city is borne along, breathing hard in the struggle that preceded its final agony—the siege of 1529—while George Eliot makes Tito an active instrument in the fortunes of the state, without violating historical consistency; and to Tito, whose "mind was a knife-edge, working without the need of momentum," she adds the bludgeon-like Dolfo Spini. We see the great monk holding the people, first by enthusiasm, then by the means which enthusiasts are often swept into using when they feel the reins slipping from them; finally accepting, under pressure, the Franciscan challenge to enter the fire. Before that, however, the crowning bitterness of Romola's life is reached, when her teacher, Savonarola, fails her, and Bernardo del Nero goes to the scaffold. All the remainder of the story that relates purely to the heroine is anticlimax. We see Tito's knife-blade working noiselessly on, the edge turned always from himself, cutting women's heart-strings and men's lives, his prosperity increasing with his treachery. The trial by fire follows, and the Masque of the Furies; and as Tito's fortunes are at their highest, the knife turns in his hands, cutting his best-laid schemes to pieces. After the death of the traitor comes the burning of Savonarola, and the story ends.

The tragedy is lighted by the conversion of Monna Brigida on the day of the Pyramid of Vanities, and by the scenes with Bratti and Tessa. But the main pathway of this latter portion becomes that from San Marco to the Piazza della Signoria, along which pass figures, blessing and cursing, cowled monks and armed rabble, the torch and the crucifix,—but all tending forward, past the death of Savonarola, to the apotheosis of Florence, when she stood alone for liberty, and fell at last after her famous siege.

It is one of the longest pathways trodden in the story, for the convent is farther from the centre of the city than most points mentioned. The nearest way from the palace is down the Calzaioli to the cathedral place, then by the Via Cavour to the Piazza di San Marco. Calzaioli is still the busiest street in Florence, and in Romola's time, far narrower than now, bore the name of the Corso degli Adimari at its northern end, and in the portion near the old palace that of the Via de' Pittori, for the painters who helped give fame to Florence were worthily lodged there. The Via Cavour was the Via Larga (the wide street), on which still stands the palace of Cosimo the Ancient. A rather paradoxical loss of its old name followed its second widening, and a good choice has given to the street of the first republic's enslaver the name of one of the liberators of Italy. San Marco, standing upon its wide piazza, is at first disappointing. It is too trim, the edges of wall and arch too sharp, too liberally covered with white and yellow wash. It seems almost tame for the great memories that should haunt it and walk the bare corridors under the beamed roof. There are plenty of them—memories of Bishop Antonino and Fra Bartolommeo and the monk of Fiesole, all giving way before those of the extraordinary man who, from 1492 to 1498, was the central figure of Italy; who drew upon himself the hatred of the pope and the Franciscans, the admiration of Michael Angelo and partisans of liberty; who reconciled austerity with the love of beauty in the eyes of such painters as Botticelli, Baccio della Porta, and Lorenzo di Credi; and who believed that to unlock the doors of Paradise the keys of St. Peter must be cleansed from the rust of the slothful popes, the blood of Sixtus

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and the Borgias. Florence is so rich in famous men that her long portico of the Uffizi has room for but a small portion of them; but among them no name is more essentially Florentine than that of the Ferrarese, Girolamo Savonarola. The traces of his footsteps are visible enough in the city which has so well retained its ancient appearance. Everyone visits his cell in San Marco, and sees his portraits there and in the academy. His church has been modernized into seventeenth-century ugliness; but on the night of the Masque of the Furies it echoed with the fusillade of monks and acolytes firing from the altar, and with the crash of blows as the scriptorius, a kind of loving young St. John to Savonarola, beat back the compagnacci with his heavy crucifix. Along the streets which, on the night of his arrest, the reformer traversed between the armed guards he had asked from the priors, we go to the Palazzo Vecchio and the Piazza della Signoria.

There are in the world few grander buildings than that citadel of Florentine liberty, the Palazzo Vecchio; it is an embodiment of militant beauty in stone. In earlier times the scene of so much that was noble and base, it became in the fifteenth century the place of Savonarola's triumph and agony. For there in the vast hall of that great council he so labored to secure, he set a whole people to work at a fever-heat of enthusiasm, with Michael Angelo and Leonardo da Vinci among the workers, that an asylum might be created, a refuge and an appeal to the many against the injustice of the few. The Medici changed the place; the arch-patrons of art destroyed the designs of Angelo and Leonardo, setting up the clumsy statues of Leo and the dukes, and the ceilings of Vasari, celebrating Cosimo;—they wanted no unpleasant souvenir of the great council. But the centuries have seen "the Medicean stamp outworn," and have placed the statue of the mighty monk in the middle of his hall.

Broad stairways lead to the base of the tower whose machicolated parapet and column-supported summit give it such unique character. A narrow spiral leads up and up, each loophole-window showing a higher sky-line, till, when the top is nearly reached, under the battlements, between the corbels of which are the shields of the republic, a horrible place opens from the stairs into the wall. In it there is just room for a stone bench the length of a man. The small, heavy door swings outward. In this hideous cell Savonarola lay for days, his body racked by the torture, his mind by the consciousness that his enemies were inventing and attributing to him lying speeches to dismay his disciples. He left it only for the stake. In the massive wall the window, less than a foot square, splays in and funnels toward a point; the one object visible from this slit in the wall is the brown mass of Santa Croce, the stronghold of his enemies the Franciscans, whence issued the challenge for the trial by fire, the first fatal downward step in the reformer's path. A few paces above this inferno, Paradise itself seems to open, as the platform of the tower is reached. Around one are the forked Ghibelline battlements; from their midst rise the four massive columns; a dizzy staircase, winding about one of these, leads to the bells; still another and narrower stairway takes one, with care and stooping, to the cow-stall, the abode of the antique *vacca*, the bell whose lowing called the townsmen together. There it still hangs from beams placed pyramidally and forming the point of the tower.

Above it, upon a vane, in violent foreshortening, Marzocco, the lion of the republic, in that attitude of ecstatic flourishing peculiar to lions in such cases, waves his mane and tail high above his brother Marzocco of the Bargello, and over all other Marzocchi, bronze, marble, or wooden, in Tuscany. Before one is the valley of the Arno, from the mountains of the Casentino to the dentellated Apennines of Carrara, with the shining river curving down to Pisa. Below is the city; and as one mounts, the great buildings rise far above their fellows, as great men in history rise to their true places in the past, when seen from the present. The familiar landmarks of the old time are still there, till we read the city like a page of Villani or of Dino Compagni. Palaces and churches stand to-day as when Guelf and Ghibelline were names potent to conjure with

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A Florentine Corner.

and to strike fire from steel; streets and squares, as when Savonarola quivered in the room below or burned upon the piazza.

There is something new, too—"The Pope Angelico is not come yet;" but here at our hand, upon the parapet, workmen are setting out lamps for the birthday of a queen who writes Savoy after her name, and yet who gathers, among those who acclaim her with affection, Florentines and the antique en-

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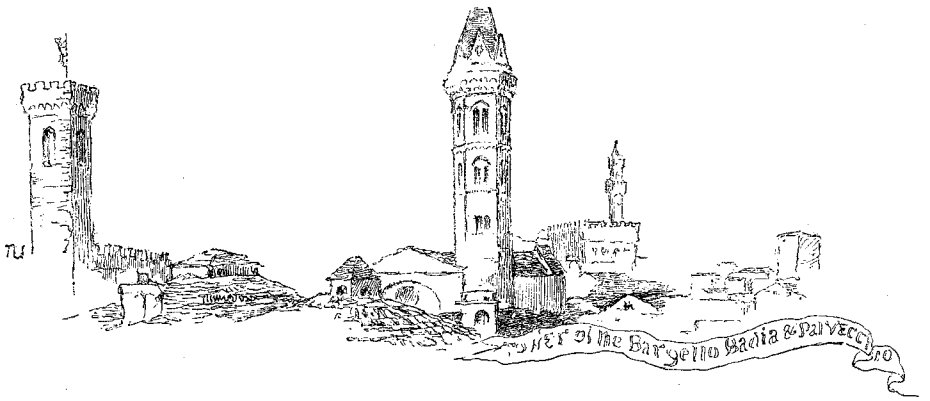
emies of Florence, citizens of north and south,—a queen of United Italy. For the ashes of Savonarola, which were sown broadcast to the wind, have borne seed in the days when the land cherishes the dust of patriots, and writes upon the stones of its cities the names of Garibaldi and Mazzini, and Cavour and Victor Emmanuel.

The story of "Romola" leaves us with a sense of sadness and defeat. Savonarola died mute and unjustified; his friends and disciples robbed, murdered, and driven into exile; his life's work undone; and the kingdom of God, he had labored to found, shaken to its foundations. But only a few years after, under a Medicean pope, he is solemnly rehabilitated by the church—the historians estimate him at his true value, devotees make pilgrimages to his cell, Fra Bartolommeo paints him as the patron saint of his order, and Raphael places him in a frescoed Paradise among a glorious company of prophets and sages. To-day, in an Italy that does not love monks, Ferrara raises his statue before the castle of the Estensi; and in Florence, in the vastness of the great council-hall, is his colossal image. Many changes have come to his beloved city; but she is faithful to his memory, and those who do not reverence the priest honor the patriot who withstood tyrants and loved liberty.

Here, in Italy, liberty has worn many guises;—she has hidden herself in the scholar's gown, and laughed in the motley; she has rioted in the Masque of the Furies, and put on the soldier's corslet, the poet's laurel, and the monk's frock and cowl. In our own days we have seen her in the red shirt of Garibaldi, when she came to take possession of the land. The miracle that prophets and patriots prayed for in vain has been wrought in its own time. After three hundred years the prophecy of Savonarola has been fulfilled, and the deliverers have come, not from without, but within, not only to save the city, but the country—a king whose proudest title was that of honest man, a soldier who unsheathed the sword of righteousness. Italy is free from the Alps to the straits. The narrow jealousies and fierce civic hatreds of province to province and town to town, are vanishing before the large ideal of national unity—an ideal nobler than that of the great reformer; and Florence can again write Liberty upon her banner, above the lions and the lilies.



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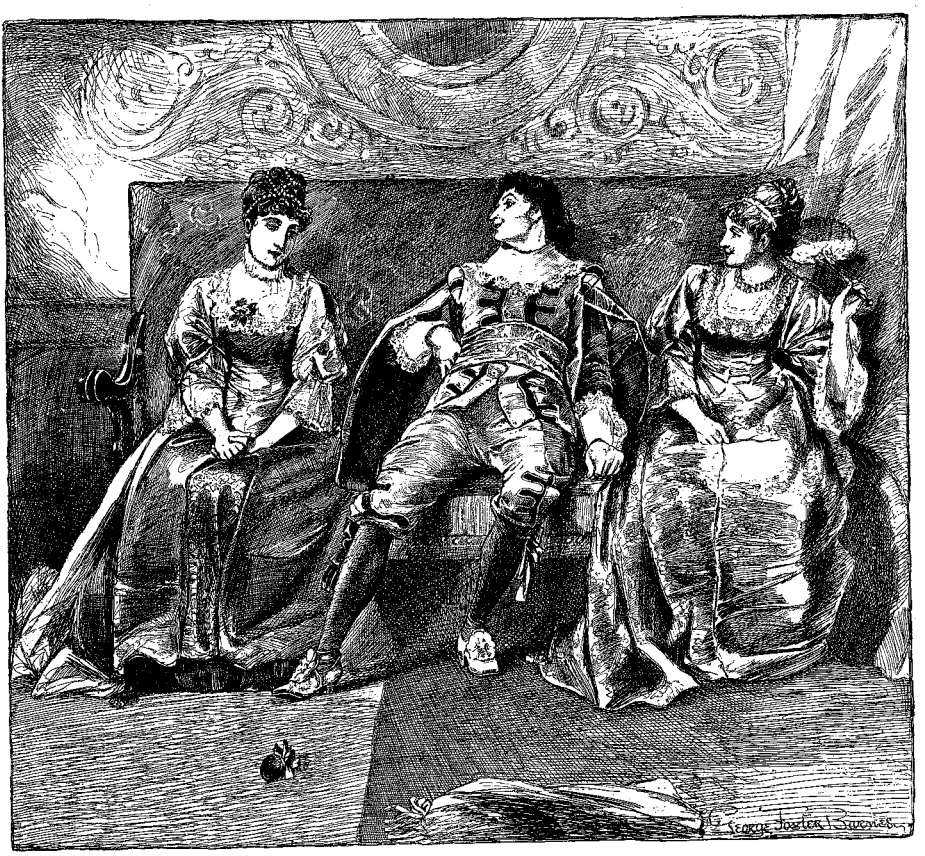
A SONG TO THE LUTE

FOR A BOOK OF AIRS.

By Austin Dobson.

I.

When first I came to Court,
Fa la!
When first I came to Court,
I deemed Dan Cupid but a boy,
And Love an idle sport,
A sport whereat a man might toy
With little hurt and mickle joy—
When first I came to Court!



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II.

Too soon I found my fault,
Fa la!
Too soon I found my fault;
The fairest of the fair brigade
Advanced to mine assault.
Alas! against an adverse maid
Nor fosse can serve, nor palisade—
Too soon I found my fault!

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III.

When INDRA's eyes assail,
Fa la!
When INDRA's eyes assail,
No feint the arts of war can show,
No counterstroke avail;
Naught skills but arms away to throw,
And kneel before that lovely foe,
When INDRA's eyes assail!

IV.

Yet is all truce in vain,
Fa la!
Yet is all truce in vain,
Since she that spares doth still pursue
To vanquish once again;
And naught remains for man to do
But fight once more to yield anew,
And so all truce is vain!

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LAW LANE.

By Sarah Orne Jewett

THE thump of a flat-iron signified to an educated passer-by that this was Tuesday morning; yesterday having been fair and the weekly washing-day unhindered by the weather. It was undoubtedly what Mrs. Powder pleased herself by calling a good orthodox week; not one of the disjointed and imperfect sections of time which a rainy Monday forced upon methodical housekeepers. Mrs. Powder was not a woman who could live altogether in the present, and whatever she did was done with a view to having it cleared out of the way of the next enterprise on her list. "I can't bear to see folks do their work as if every piece on't was a tread-mill," she used to say, briskly. "Life means progriss to me, and I can't dwell by the way no more'n sparks can fly downwards. 'Tain't the way I'm built, nor none of the Fisher tribe."

The hard white bundles in the shallow splint-basket were disappearing, one by one, and taking their places on the decrepit clothes-horse, well ironed and precisely folded. The July sunshine came in at one side of Mrs. Powder's kitchen, and the cool northwest breeze blew the heat out again from the other side. Mrs. Powder grew uneasy and impatient as she neared the end of her task, and the flat-iron moved more and more vigorously. She kept glancing out through the doorway and along the country road, as if she were watching for somebody.

"I shall just have to git ready an' go an' rout her out myself, an' take my chances," she said at last with a resentful look at the clock, as if it were partly to blame for the delay and had ears with which to listen to proper rebuke. The round moon-face had long ago ceased its waxing and waning across the upper part of the old dial, as if it had forgotten its responsibility about the movements of a heavenly body in its pleased concern about the housekeeping.

"See here!" said Mrs. Powder, taking a last hot iron from the fire. "You ain't a-keepin' time like you used to; you're gettin' lazy, I must say. Look at this 'ere sun-mark on the floor, that calls it full 'leven o'clock and you want six minutes to ten. I've got to send word to the clock-man and have your in'ards all took apart; you got me to meetin' more'n half an hour too late, Sabbath last."

To which the moon-face did not change its beaming expression; very likely, being a moon, it was not willing to mind the ways of the sun.

"Lord, what an old thing you be!" said Mrs. Powder, turning away with a chuckle. "I don't wonder your sense kind of fails you!" And the clock clucked at her by way of answer, though presently it was going to strike ten at any rate.

The hot iron was now put down hurriedly, and the half-ironed night-cap was left in a queer position on the ironing-board. A small figure had appeared in the road and was coming toward the house with a fleet, barefooted run which required speedy action. "Here you, Joel Smith!" shouted the old woman. "Jo—el!" But the saucy lad only doubled his pace and pretended not to see or hear her. Mrs. Powder could play at that game, too, and did not call again, but quietly went back to her ironing and tried as hard as she could to be provoked. Presently the boy came panting up the slope of green turf which led from the road to the kitchen doorstep.

"I didn't know but you spoke as I ran by," he remarked, in an amiable tone. Mrs. Powder took no heed of him whatever.

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"I ain't in no hurry; I kind o' got running," he explained, a moment later; and then, as his hostess stepped toward the stove, he caught up the frilled night-cap and tied it on in a twinkling. When Mrs. Powder turned again the sight of him was too much for her gravity.

"Them frills is real becoming to ye," she announced, shaking with laughter. "I declare for't if you don't favor your gran'ma Dodge's looks. I should like to have yer folks see ye. There, take it off now; I'm most through my ironin' and I want to clear it out o' the way."

Joel was perfectly docile and laid the night-cap within reach. He had a temptation to twitch it back by the end of one string, but he refrained. "Want me to go drive your old brown hen-turkey out o' the wet grass, Mis' Powder? She's tolling her chicks off down to'a'ds the swamp," he offered.

"She's raised up families enough to know how by this time," said Mrs. Powder, "an' the swamp's dry as a bone."

"I'll split ye up a mess o' kindlin'-wood whilst I'm here, jest as soon's not," said Joel, in a still more pleasant tone, after a long and anxious pause.

"There, I'll get ye your doughnuts, pretty quick. They ain't so fresh as they was Saturday. I s'pose that's what you're driving at." The good soul shook with laughter. Joel answered as well for her amusement as the most famous of comic actors; there was something in his appealing eyes, his thin cheeks and monstrous freckles, and his long locks of sandy hair, which was very funny to Mrs. Powder. She was always interested, too, in fruitless attempts to satisfy his appetite. He listened now, for the twentieth time, to her opinion that the bottomless pit alone could be compared to the recesses of his being. "I should like to be able to say that I had filled ye up jest once!" she ended her remarks, as she brought a tin pan full of doughnuts from her pantry.

"Heard the news?" asked small Joel, as he viewed the provisions with glistening eyes. He bore likeness to a little hungry woodchuck, or muskrat, as he went to work before the tin pan.

"What news?" Mrs. Powder asked, suspiciously. "I ain't seen nobody this day."

"Barnet's folks has got their case in court."

"They ain't!" and while a solemn silence fell upon the kitchen, the belated old clock whirred and rumbled and struck ten with persistent effort. Mrs. Powder looked round at it impatiently; the moon-face confronted her with the same placid smile.

"Twelve o'clock's the time you git your dinner, ain't it, Mis' Powder?" the boy inquired, as if he had repeated his news like a parrot and had no further interest in its meaning.

"I don't plot for to get me no reg'lar dinner this day," was the unexpected reply. "You can eat a couple or three o' them nuts and step along, for all I care. An' I want you to go up Lyddy Bangs's lane and carry her word that I'm goin' out to pick me some blue-berries. They'll be ripened up elegant, and I've got a longin' for 'em. Tell her I say 'tis our day—she'll know; we've be'n after 'arly blueberries together this forty years, and Lyddy knows where to meet with me; there by them split rocks."

The ironing was finished a few minutes afterward, and the board was taken to its place in the shed. When Mrs. Powder returned, Joel had stealthily departed; the tin pan was turned upside down on the seat of the kitchen-chair. "Good land!" said the astonished woman, "I believe he'll bu'st himself to everlastin' bliss one o' these days. Them doughnuts would have lasted me till Thursday, certain."

"Gimme suthin' to eat, Mis' Powder?" whined Joel at the window, with his plaintive countenance lifted just above the sill. But he set forth immediately down the road, with bulging pockets and the speed of a light-horseman.

II.

Half an hour later the little gray farm-house was shut and locked, and its mistress was crossing the next pasture with a surprisingly quick step for a person of her age and weight. An old cat was trotting after her, with tail high in the air, but it was plain to see that she still

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looked for danger, having just come down from the woodpile, where she had retreated on Joel's first approach. She kept as close to Mrs. Powder as was consistent with short excursions after crickets or young, unwary sparrows, and opened her wide green eyes fearfully on the lookout for that evil monster, the boy.

There were two pastures to cross, and Mrs. Powder was very much heated by the noonday sun and entirely out of breath when she approached the familiar rendezvous and caught sight of her friend's cape-bonnet.

"Ain't there no justice left?" was her indignant salutation. "I s'pose you've heard that Crosby's folks have lost their case? Poor Mis' Crosby! 'twill kill her, I'm sure. I've be'n calculatin' to go berryin' all the forenoon, but I couldn't git word to you till Joel came tootin' by. I thought likely you'd expect notice when you see what a good day 'twas.

"I did," replied Lyddy Bangs, in a tone much more serious than her companion's. She was a thin, despairing little body, with an anxious face and a general look of disappointment and poverty, though really the more prosperous person of the two. "Joel told me you said 'twas our day," she added. "I'm wore out tryin' to satisfy that boy; he's always beggin' for somethin' to eat every time he comes nigh the house. I should think they'd see to him to home; not let him batten on the neighbors so."

"You ain't been feedin' of him, too?" laughed Mrs. Powder. "Well, I declare, I don't see whar he puts it!" and she fanned herself with her apron. "I always forget what a sightly spot this is."

"Here's your pussy-cat, ain't she?" asked Lyddy Bangs, needlessly, as they sat looking off over the valley. Behind them the hills rose one above another, with their bare upland clearings and great stretches of pine and beech forest. Beyond the wide valley was another range of hills, green and pleasant in the clear mid-day light. Some higher mountains loomed, sterile and stony, to northward. They were on the women's right as they sat looking westward.

"It does seem as if folks might keep the peace when the Lord's give 'em so pooty a spot to live in," said Lyddy Bangs, regretfully. "There ain't no better farms than Barnet's and Crosby's folks have got neither, but 'stead o' neighboring they must pick their mean fusses and fight from generation to generation. My gran'ma'am used to say 'twas just so with 'em when she was a girl—and she

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"So Ruth and Ezra parted."

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was one of the first settlers up this way. She al'ays would have it that Barnet's folks was the most to blame, but there's plenty sides with 'em, as you know."

"There, 'tis all mixed up, so 'tis—a real tangle," answered Mrs. Powder. "I've been o' both minds—I must say I used to hold for the Crosbys in the old folks' time, but I've come round to see they ain't perfect. There! I'm b'ilin' over with somethin' I've got to tell somebody. I've kep' it close long's I can."

"Let's get right to pickin', then," said Lyddy Bangs, "or we sha'n't budge from here the whole livin' afternoon," and the small thin figure and the tall stout one moved off together toward their well-known harvest-fields. They were presently settled down within good hearing distance, and yet the discussion was not begun. The cat curled herself for a nap on the smooth top of a rock.

"There, I have to eat awhile first, like a young-one," said Mrs. Powder. "I always tell 'em that blueberries is only fit to eat right off of the twigs. You want 'em full o' sun; let 'em git cold and they're only fit to cook—not but what I eat 'em any ways I can git 'em. Ain't they nice an' spicy? Law, my poor knees is so stiff! I begin to be afraid, nowadays, every year o' berryin' may be my last. I don' know why't should be that my knees serves me so. I ain't rheumaticky, nor none o' my folks was; we go off with other complaints."

"The mukis membrane o' the knees gits dried up," explained Lyddy Bangs, "an' the j'ints is all powder-posted. So I've be'n told, anyways."

"Then they was ignorant," retorted her companion, sharply. "I know by the feelin's I have"—and the two friends picked industriously and discussed the vexed points of medicine no more.

"I can't force them Barnets and Crosbys out o' my mind," suggested Miss Bangs after awhile, being eager to receive the proffered confidence which might be forgotten. "Think of 'em, without no other door-neighbors, fightin' for three ginerations over the bounds of a lane wall. What if 'twas two foot one way or two foot t'other, let 'em agree."

"But that's just what they couldn't," said Mrs. Powder. "You know yourself you might be willin' to give away a piece o' land, but when somebody said 'twa'n't yours, 'twas theirs, 'twould take more Christian grace'n I've got to let 'em see I thought they was right. All the old Crosbys ever wanted, first, was for the Barnets to say two foot of the lane was theirs by rights, and then they was willin' to turn it into the lane and to give that two foot more o' the wedth than Barnets did—they wa'n't haggling for no pay; 'twas for rights. But Barnet's folks said——"

"Now, don't you go 'an git all flustered up a-tellin' that over, Harri't Powder," said the lesser woman. "There ain't be'n no words spoke so often as them along this sidelin' hill, not even the Ten Commandments. The only sense there's be'n about it is, they've let each other alone altogether, and ain't spoke at all for six months to a time. I can't help hoping that the war'll die out with the old breed and they'll come to some sort of peace. Mis' Barnet was a Sands, and they're toppin' sort o' folks and she's got fight in her. I think she's more to blame than Barnet, a good sight; but Mis' Crosby's a downright peace-making little creatur', and would have ended it long ago if she'd be'n able."

"Barnet's stubborn, too, let me tell you!" and Mrs. Powder's voice was full of anger. "'Twill never die out in his day, and he'll spend every cent lawing, as the old folks did afore him. The lawyers must laugh at him well, 'mongst themselves. One an' another o' the best on 'em has counselled them to leave it out to referees, and tried to show 'em they was fools. My man talked with the judge himself about it, once, after he'd been settin' on a jury and they was comin' away from court. They couldn't agree; they never could! All the spare money o' both farms has gone to pay the lawyers and carry on one fight after another. Now, folks don't know it, but Crosby's farm is all mortgaged; they've spent even what Mis' Crosby had from her folks. An' there's worse behind—there's worse behind," insisted the speaker, stoutly. "I went up there this spring, as you know, when Mis' Crosby was at death's door with lung-fever. I went through everything fetchin' of her round, and was there five weeks, till she

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got about. 'I feel to'des you as an own sister,' says Abby Crosby to me. 'I'm a neighboring woman at heart,' says she; 'and just you think of it, that my man had to leave me alone, sick as I was, while he went for you and the doctor, not riskin' to ask Barnet's folks to send for help. I like to live pleasant,' says she to me, and bu'st right out a-cryin'. I knew then how she'd felt things all these years.—How are they ever goin' to pay more court bills and all them piles o' damages, if the farm's mortgaged so heavy?" she resumed. "Crosby's farm ain't worth a good two-thirds of Barnet's. They've both neglected their lands. How many you got so fur, Lyddy?"

Lyddy proudly displayed her gains of blueberries; the pail was filling very fast, and the friends were at their usual game of rivalry. Mrs. Powder had been the faster picker in years past, and she now doubled her diligence.

"Ain't the sweet-fern thick an' scented as ever you see?" she said. "Gimme pasture-lands rather'n the best gardins that grows. If I can have a sweet-brier bush and sweet-fern patch and some clumps o' bayberry, you can take all the gardin blooms. Look how folks toils with witch-grass and pusley and gets a starved lot o' poor sprigs, slug-eat, and all dyin' together in their front yards, when they might get better comfort in the first pasture along the road. I guess there's somethin' wild, that's never got tutored out o' me. I must ha' be'n made o' somethin' counter to town dust. I never could see why folks wanted to go off an' live out o' sight o' the mountings, an' have everything on a level."

"You said there was worse to tell behind," suggested Lyddy Bangs, as if it were only common politeness to show an appreciation of the friendly offering.

"I have it in mind to get round to that in proper course," responded Mrs. Powder, a trifle offended by the mild pertinacity. "I settled it in my mind that I was goin' to tell you somethin' for a kind of a treat the day we come out blueberryin'. *There!*"—and Mrs. Powder rose with difficulty from her knees, and retreated pompously to the shade of a hemlock-tree which grew over a shelving rock near by.

Lyddy Bangs could not resist picking a little longer in an unusually fruitful spot; then she hastened to seat herself by her friend. It was no common occasion.

Mrs. Powder was very warm; and further evaded and postponed telling the secret by wishing that she were as light on foot as her companion, and deploring her increasing weight. Then she demanded a second sight of the blueberries, which were compared and decided upon as to quality and quantity. Then the cat, which had been left at some distance on her rock, came trotting toward her mistress in a disturbed way, and after a minute of security in a comfortable lap darted away again in a strange, excited manner.

"She's goin' to have a fit, I do believe!" exclaimed Lyddy Bangs, quite disheartened, for the cat was Mrs. Powder's darling and she might leave everything to go in search of her.

"She may have seen a snake or something. She often gets scared and runs home when we're out a-trarvellin'," said the cat's owner, complacently, and Lyddy's spirits rose again.

"I suppose you never suspected that Ezra Barnet and Ruth Crosby cared the least thing about one another?" inquired the keeper of the secret a moment later, and the listener turned toward Mrs. Powder with a startled face.

"Now, Harri't Powder, for mercy's sakes alive!" was all that she could say; but Mrs. Powder was satisfied, and confirmed the amazing news by a most emphatic nod.

"My lawful sakes! what be they goin' to do about it?" inquired Lyddy Bangs, flushing with excitement. "A Barnet an' a Crosby fall in love! Don't you rec'lect how the old ones was al'ays fightin' and callin' names when we was all to school together? Times is changed, certain."

"Now, say you hope to die if ever you'll tell a word I say," pursued Mrs. Powder. "If I was to be taken away tomorrow, you'd be all the one that would know it except Mis' Crosby and Ezra and Ruth themselves. 'Twas nothin' but her bein' nigh to death that urged her to tell me the state o' things. I s'pose she thought I might favor 'em in

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time to come. Abby Crosby she says to me, 'Mis' Powder, my poor girl may need your motherin' care.' An' I says, 'Mis' Crosby, she shall have it;' and then she had a spasm o' pain, and we harped no more that day as I remember."

"How come it about? I shouldn't have told anybody that asked me that a Barnet and a Crosby ever 'changed the time o' day, much less kep' company," protested the listener.

"Kep' company! pore young creatur's!" said Mrs. Powder. "They've hid 'em away in the swamps an' hollers, and in the edge o' the growth, at nightfall, for the sake o' gittin' a word; an' they've stole out, shiverin', into that plaguey lane o' winter nights. I tell ye I've heard hifalutin' folks say that love would still be lord of all, but I never was 'strained to believe it till I see what that boy and girl was willin' to undergo. All the hate of all their folks is turned to love in them, and I couldn't help a-watchin' of 'em. An' I ventured to send Ruth over to my house after my alpaccy aprin, and then I made an arrant out to the spring-brook to see if there was any cresses started—which I knew well enough there wasn't—and I spoke right out bold to Ezra, that was at work on a piece of ditching over on his land. 'Ezra,' says I, 'if you git time, just run over to the edge o' my pasture and pick me a handful o' balm o' Gilead buds. I want to put 'em in half a pint o' new rum for Mis' Crosby, and there ain't a soul to send.' I knew he'd just meet her coming back, if I could time it right gittin' of Ruth started. He looked at me kind of curi's, and pretty quick I see him leggin' it over the fields with an axe and a couple o' ends o' board, like he'd got to mend a fence. I had to keep her dinner warm for her till ha'-past one o'clock. I don't know what he mentioned to his folks, but Ruth she come an' kissed me hearty when she first come inside the door. 'Tis harder for Ezra; he ain't got nobody to speak to, and Ruth's got her mother if she is a Mis' Much-afraid."

"I don't know's we can blame Crosby for not wantin' to give his girl to the Barnets, after they've got away all his substance, his means, an' his cattle, like 'twas in the Book o' Job," urged Lyddy Bangs. "Seems if they might call it square an' marry the young folks off, but they won't, nohow; 'twill only fan the flame." Lyddy Bangs was a sentimental person; neighbor Powder had chosen wisely in gaining a new friend to the cause of Ezra Barnet's apparently hopeless affection. Unknown to herself, however, she had been putting the lover's secret to great risk of untimely betrayal.

The weather was most beautiful that afternoon; there was an almost intoxicating freshness and delight among the sweet odors of the hill-side pasture, and the two elderly women were serene at heart and felt like girls again as they talked together. They remembered many an afternoon like this; they grew more and more confiding as they reviewed the past and their life-long friendship. A stranger might have gathered only the most rural and prosaic statements, and a tedious succession of questions, from what Mrs. Powder and Lyddy Bangs had to say to each other, but the old stories of true love and faithful companionship were again simply rehearsed. Those who are only excited by more complicated histories, too often forget that there are no new plots to the comedies and tragedies of life. They are played sometimes by country people in homespun, sometimes by townsfolk in velvet and lace. Love and prosperity, death and loss and misfortune—the stories weave themselves over and over again, never mind whether the ploughman or the wit of the clubs plays the part of hero.

The two homely figures sat still so long that they seemed to become permanent points in the landscape, and the small birds, and even a wary chipmunk, went their ways unmindful of Mrs. Powder and Lyddy Bangs. The old hemlock-tree, under which they sat discoursing, towered high above the young pine-growth which clustered thick behind them on the hill-side. In the middle of a comfortable reflection upon the Barnet grandfather's foolishness or craftiness, Mrs. Powder gave sudden utterance to the belief that some creature up in the tree was dropping pieces of bark and cones all over her.

"A squirrel, most like," said Lyddy Bangs, looking up into the dense branches. "The tree is a-scatterin'

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down, ain't it? As you was sayin', Grandsir Barnet must have knowed well enough what he was about——"

"Oh, gorry! oh, git out! ow—o—w!" suddenly wailed a voice overhead, and a desperate scramble and rustling startled the good women half out of their wits. "Ow, Mis' Powder!" shrieked a familiar voice, while both hearts thumped fast, and Joel came, half falling, half climbing, down out of the tree. He bawled, and beat his head with his hands, and at last rolled in agony among the bayberry and lamb-kill. "Look out for 'em!" he shouted. "Oh, gorry! I thought 'twas only an old last-year's hornit's nest—they'll sting you, too!"

Mrs. Powder untied her apron and laid about her with sure aim. Only two hornets were to be seen; but after these were beaten to the earth, and she stopped to regain her breath, Joel hardly dared to lift his head or to look about him.

"What was you up there for, anyhow?" asked Lyddy Bangs, with severe suspicion. "Harking to us, I'll be bound!" But Mrs. Powder, who knew Joel's disposition best, elbowed her friend into silence and began to inquire about the condition of his wounds. There was a deep-seated hatred between Joel and Miss Bangs.

"Oh, dear! they've bit me all over," groaned the boy. "Ain't you got somethin' you can rub on, Mis' Powder?"—and the rural remedy of fresh earth was suggested.

"'Tis too dry here," said the adviser. "Just you step down to that ma'shy spot there by the brook, dear, and daub you with the wet mud real good, and 'twill ease you right away." Mrs. Powder's voice sounded compassionate, but her spirit and temper of mind gave promise of future retribution.

"I'll teach him to follow us out eavesdropping, this fashion!" said Lyddy Bangs, when the boy had departed, weeping. "I'm more'n gratified that the hornits got hold of him! I hope 'twill serve him for a lesson."

"Don't you r'ile him up one mite, now," pleaded Mrs. Powder, while her eyes bore witness of hardly controlled anger. "He's the worst tattle-tale I ever see, and we've put ourselves into a trap. If he tells his mother she'll spread it all over town. But I should no more thought o' his bein' up in that tree than o' his bein' the sarpent in the garden o' Eden. You leave Joel to me, and be mild with him's you can."

The culprit approached, still lamenting. His ear and cheek were hugely swollen already, so that one eye was nearly closed. The blueberry expedition was relinquished, and with heavy sighs of dissatisfaction Lyddy Bangs took up the two half-filled pails, while Mrs. Powder kindly seized Joel by his small, thin hand, and the little group moved homeward across the pasture.

"Where's your hat?" asked Lyddy, stopping short, after they had walked a little distance.

"Hanging on a limb up by the wop's nest," answered Joel. "Oh, git me home, Mis' Powder!"

III.

No one would suspect, from the look of the lane itself, that it had always been such a provoker of wrath, and even a famous battle-ground. While petty wars had raged between the men and women of the old farms, walnut-trees had grown high in air, and apple-trees had leaned their heavy branches on the stone walls and, year after year, decked themselves in pink-and-white blossoms to arch this unlucky by-way for a triumphal procession of peace that never came. Birds built their nests in the boughs and pecked the ripe blackberries; green brakes and wild roses and tall barberry-bushes flourished in their season on either side the wheel-ruts. It was a remarkably pleasant country lane, where children might play and lovers might linger. No one would imagine that this lane had its lawsuits and damages, its annual crop of briefs, and succession of surveyors and quarrelsome partisans; or that in every generation of owners each man must be either plaintiff or defendant.

The surroundings looked permanent enough. No one would suspect that a certain piece of wall had been more than once thrown down by night and built again, angrily, by day; or that a well-

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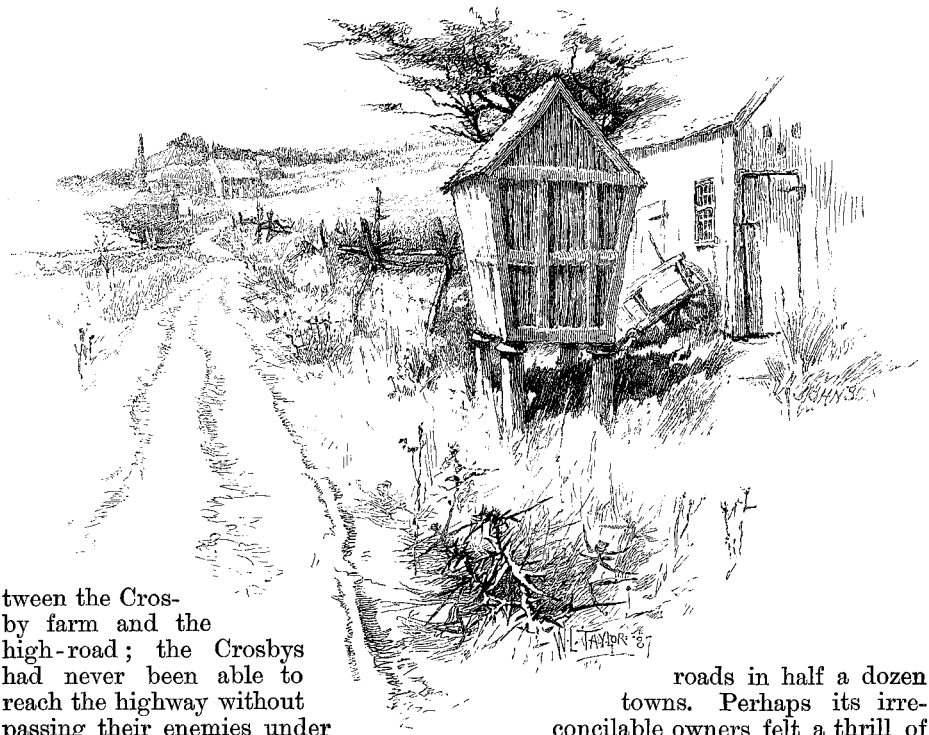
timbered corn-house had been the cause of much litigation, and even now looked, when you came to know its story, as if it stood on its long, straight legs, like an ungainly, top-heavy beast, all ready to stalk away when its position became too dangerous. The Barnets had built it beyond their boundary; it had been moved two or three times, backward and forward.

The Barnet house and land stood between the Crosby farm and the high-road; the Crosbys had never been able to reach the highway without passing their enemies under full fire of ugly looks or taunting voices. The intricacies of legal complications in the matter of right of way would be impossible to explain. They had never been very clear to any impartial investigator. Barnets and Crosbys had gone to their graves with bitter hatred and sullen desire for revenge in their hearts. Perhaps this one great interest, outside the simple matters of food and clothing and farmers' work, had taken the place to them of drama and literature and art. One could not help thinking, as he looked at the decrepit fences and mossy, warped roofs and buckling walls, to how much better use so much money might have been put. The costs of court and the lawyers' fees had taken everything, and men had drudged, in heat and frost, and women had pinched and slaved to pay the law's bills. Both the Barnet and Crosby of the present time stood well enough in the opinion of other neighbors. They were hard-fisted, honest men; the fight was inherited to begin with, and they were stubborn enough to hold fast to the fight. Law Lane was as well known as the county



roads in half a dozen towns. Perhaps its irreconcilable owners felt a thrill of enmity that had come straight down from Scottish border-frays, as they glanced along its crooked length. Who could believe, that the son and daughter of the warring households, instead of being ready to lift the torch in their turn, had weakly and misguidedly fallen in love with each other?

Nobody liked Mrs. Barnet. She was a cross-grained, suspicious soul, who was a tyrant and terror of discomfort in her own household whenever the course of events ran counter to her preference. Her son Ezra was a complete contrast to her in disposition, and to his narrow-minded, prejudiced father as well. The elder Ezra was capable of better things,

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however, and might have been reared to friendliness and justice, if the Crosby of his youthful day had not been specially aggravating and the annals of Law Lane at their darkest page. If there had been another boy to match young Ezra, on the Crosby farm, the two might easily have fostered their natural boyish rivalries until something worse came into being; but when one's enemy is only a sweet-faced little girl, it is very hard to impute to her all manner of discredit and serpent-like power of evil. At least, so Ezra Barnet the younger felt in his inmost heart; and though he minded his mother for the sake of peace, and played his solitary games and built his unapplauded dams and woodchuck-traps on his own side of the fences, he always saw Ruth Crosby as she came and went, and liked her better and better as years went by. When the tide of love rose higher than the young people's steady heads, they soon laid fast hold of freedom. With all their perplexities, life was by no means at its worst, and rural diplomacy must bend all its energies to hinder these unexpected lovers.

Ezra Barnet had never so much as entered the Crosby house; the families were severed beyond the reuniting power of even a funeral. Ezra could only try to imagine the room to which his Ruth had returned one summer evening after he had left her, reluctantly, because the time drew near for his father's return from the village. His mother had been in a peculiarly bad temper all day, and he had been glad to escape from her unwelcome insistence that he should marry any one of two or three capable girls, and so furnish some help in the housekeeping. Ezra had often heard this suggestion of his duty, and, tired and provoked at last, he had stolen out to the garden and wandered beyond it to the brook and out to the fields. Somewhere, somehow, he had met Ruth, and the lovers bewailed their trials with unusual sorrow and impatience. It seemed very hard to wait. Young Barnet was ready to persuade the tearful girl that they must go away together and establish a peaceful home of their own. He was heartily ashamed because the last verdict was in his father's favor, and Ruth forebore to wound him with any glimpse of the straits to which her own father had been reduced. She was too dutiful to leave the pinched household, where her help was needed more than ever; she persuaded her lover that they were sure to be happy at last—indeed, were not they happy now? How much worse it would be if they could not safely seize so many opportunities, brief though they were, of being together! If the fight had been less absorbing and the animosity less bitter, they might have been suspected long ago.

So Ruth and Ezra parted, with uncounted kisses, and Ezra went back to the dingy-walled kitchen, where his mother sat alone. It was hardly past twilight out of doors, but Mrs. Barnet had lighted a kerosene-lamp and sat near the small open window mending a hot-looking old coat. She looked so needlessly uncomfortable and surly that her son was filled with pity, as he stood watching her, there among the moths and beetles that buffeted the lamp-chimney.

"Why don't you put down your sewing and come out a little ways up the road, mother, and get cooled off?" he asked, pleasantly; but she only twitched herself in her chair and snapped off another needleful of linen thread.

"I can't spare no time to go gallivantin', like some folks," she answered. "I always have had to work, and I always shall. I see that Crosby girl mincin' by an hour ago, as if she'd be'n off all the afternoon. Folks that think she's so amiable about saving her mother's strength would be surprised at the way she dawdles round, I guess"—and Mrs. Barnet crushed an offending beetle with her brass thimble in a fashion that disgusted Ezra. Somehow, his mother had a vague instinct that he did not like to hear sharp words about Ruth Crosby. Yet he rarely had been betrayed into an ill-judged defence. He had left Ruth only a minute ago; he knew exactly what she had been doing all day, and from what kind errand she had been returning; the blood rushed quickly to his face, and he rose from his seat by the table and went out to the kitchen doorstep. The air was cool and sweet, and a sleepy bird chirped once or twice from an elm-bough overhead. The moon was near its rising, and he could see the

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great shapes of the mountains that lay to the eastward. He forgot his mother, and began to think about Ruth again; he wondered if she were not thinking of him, and meant to ask her if she remembered an especial feeling of nearness just at this hour. Ezra turned to look at the clock to mark the exact time.

"Yes," said Mrs. Barnet, as she saw him try to discover the hour, "'tis time that father was to home. I s'pose, bein' mail-night, everybody was out to the post-office to hear the news, and most like he's bawlin' himself hoarse about fall 'lections or something. He ain't got done braggin' about our gittin' the case, neither. There's always some new one that wants to git the p'ints right from headquarters. I didn't see Crosby go by, did you?"

"He'd have had to foot it by the path 'cross-lots," replied Ezra, gravely, from the doorstep. "He's sold his hoss."

"He ain't!" exclaimed Mrs. Barnet, with a chuckle. "I s'pose they're proddin' him for the money up to court. Guess he won't try to fight us again for one while."

Ezra said nothing; he could not bear this sort of thing much longer. "I won't be kept like a toad under a harrow," he muttered to himself. "I think it seems kind of hard," he ventured to say aloud. "Now he's got to hire when fall work comes on, and——"

The hard-hearted woman within had long been trying to provoke her peaceable son into an argument, and now the occasion had come. Ezra restrained himself from speech with a desperate effort, and stopped his ears to the sound of his mother's accusing voice. In the middle of her harangue a wagon was driven into the yard, and his father left it quickly and came toward the door.

"Come in here, you lout!" he shouted, angrily. "I want to look at you! I want to see what such a mean-spirited sneak has got to say for himself." Then changing his voice to a whine, he begged Ezra, who had caught him from falling as he stumbled over the step, "Come in, boy, an' tell me 'tain't true. I guess they was only thornin' of me up; you ain't took a shine to that Crosby miss, now, have you?"

"No son of mine—no son of mine!" burst out the mother, who had been startled by the sudden entrance of the news-bringer. Her volubility was promptly set free, and Ezra looked from his father's face to his mother's.

"Father," said he, turning away from the scold, who was nearly inarticulate in her excess of rage—"father, I'd rather talk to you, if you want to hear what I've got to say. Mother's got no reason in her."

"Ezry," said the elder man, "I see how 'tis. Let your ma'am talk all she will. I'm broke with shame of ye!"—his voice choked weakly in his throat. "Either you tell me 'tis all nonsense, or you go out o' that door and shut it after you for good. An' ye're all the child I've got."

The woman had stopped at last, mastered by the terror of the moment. Her husband's face was gray with passion; her son's cheeks were flushed and his eyes were full of tears. Mrs. Barnet's tongue for once had lost its cunning.

The two men looked at each other as long as they could; the younger man's eyes fell first. "I wish you wouldn't be hasty," he said; "to-morrow——"

"You've heard," was the only answer; and in a moment more Ezra Barnet reached to the table and took his old straw hat which lay there.

"Good-by, father!" he said, steadily. "I think you're wrong, sir; but I never meant to carry on that old fight and live like the heathen." And then, young and strong and angry, he left the kitchen.

"He might have took some notice o' me, if he's goin' for good," said the mother, spitefully; but her son did not hear this taunt, and the father only tottered where he stood. The moths struck against his face as if it were a piece of wood; he sank feebly into a chair, muttering, and trying to fortify himself in his spent anger.

Ezra went out, dazed and giddy. But he found the young horse wandering about the yard, eager for his supper and fretful at the strange delay. He unharnessed the creature and backed the wagon under the shed; then he turned and looked at the house—should he go in? No! The fighting instinct, which had kept firm grasp on father and grandfather, took possession of Ezra now. He

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crossed the yard and went out at the gate, and down the lane's end to the main road. The father and mother listened to his footsteps, and the man gave a heavy groan.

"Let him go—let him go! 'twill teach him a lesson!" said Mrs. Barnet, with something of her usual spirit. She could not say more, though she tried her best; the occasion was far too great.

How many times that summer Mrs. Powder attempted to wreak vengeance upon Joel, the tattle-tale; into what depths of intermittent remorse that mischief-making boy was resolutely plunged, who shall describe? No more luncheons of generous provision; no more jovial skirmishing at the kitchen windows, or liberal payment for easy errands. Whenever Mrs. Powder saw Lyddy Bangs, or any other intimate and sympathetic friend, she bewailed her careless confidences under the hemlock-tree and detailed her anxious attentions to the hornet-stung eavesdropper.

"I went right home," she would say, sorrowfully; "I filled him plumb-full with as good a supper as I could gather up, and I took all the fire out o' them hornit-stings with the best o' remedies. 'Joel, dear,' says I, 'you won't lose by it if you keep your mouth shut about them words I spoke to Lyddy Bangs,' and he was that pious I might ha' known he meant mischief. They ain't boys nor men, they're divils, when they come to that size, and so you mark my words! But his mother never could keep nothing to herself, and I knew it from past sorrers; and I never slept a wink that night—sure's you live—till the roosters crowed for day."

"Perhaps 'twon't do nothin' but good!" Lyddy Bangs would say, consolingly. "Perhaps the young folks'll git each other a sight the sooner. They'd had to kep' it to theirselves till they was gray-headed 'less somebody let the cat out o' the bag."

"Don't you rec'lect how my cat acted that day!" exclaimed Mrs. Powder, excitedly. "How she was good as took with a fit! She knowed well enough what was brewin'; I only wish we'd had half of her sense."

IV.

The day before Christmas all the long valley was white with deep, new-fallen snow. The road which led up from the neighboring village and the railroad station stretched along the western slope—a mere trail, untrodden and unbroken. The storm had just ceased; the high mountain-peaks were clear and keen and rose-tinted with the waning light; the hills were no longer green with their covering of pines and maples and beeches, but gray with bare branches, and a cold, dense color, almost black, where the evergreens grew thickest. On the other side of the valley the farmsteads were mapped out as if in etching or pen-drawing; the far-away orchards were drawn with a curious exactness and reg-

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ularity, the crooked boughs of the apple-trees and the longer lines of the walnuts and ashes and elms came out against the snow with clear beauty. The fences and walls were buried in snow; the farm-houses and barns were petty shapes, in their right-angled unlikeness to natural growths. You were half amused, half shocked, as the thought came to you of indifferent creatures called men and women, who busied themselves within those narrow walls, under so vast a sky, and fancied the whole importance of the universe was belittled by that of their few pent acres. What a limitless world lay outside those plaything-farms, yet what beginnings of immortal things the small gray houses had known!

The day before Christmas!—a festival which seemed in that neighborhood to be of modern origin. The observance of it was hardly popular yet among the elder people, but Christmas had been appropriated, nevertheless, as if everybody had felt the lack of it. New Year's Day never was sufficient for New England, even in its least mirthful decades. For those persons who took true joy in life, something deeper was needed than the spread-eagle self-congratulations of the Fourth of July, or the family reunions of Thanksgiving Day. There were no bells ringing which the country-folks in Law Lane might listen for on Christmas Eve; but something more than the joy that is felt in the poorest dwelling when a little child, with all its possibilities, is born; something happier still came through that snowy valley with the thought of a Christmas-Child who "was the bringer-in and founder of the reign of the higher life." This was the greater Thanksgiving Day, when the whole of Christendom is called to praise and pray and hear the good-tidings, and every heart catches something of the joyful inspiration of good-will to men.

Ezra Barnet sat on a fallen tree from which he had brushed the powdery snow. It was hard work wading through the drifts, and he had made good headway up the long hill before he stopped to rest. Across the valley in the fading daylight he saw the two farms, and could even trace the course of Law Lane itself, marked by the well-known trees. How small his great nut-tree looked at this distance! The two houses, with their larger and smaller out-buildings and snow-topped woodpiles, looked as if they had crept near together for protection and companionship. There were no other houses within a wide space. Ezra knew how remote the homes really were from each other, judged by any existing sympathy and interest. He thought of his bare, unnourished boyhood with something like resentment; then he remembered how small had been his parents' experience, what poor ambition had been fostered in them by their lives; even his mother's impatience with the efforts he had made to bring a little more comfort and pleasantness to the old farm-house was thought of with pity for her innate lack of pleasure in pleasant things. Ezra himself was made up of inadequacies, being born and bred of the Barnets. He was at work on the railroad now, with small pay; but he had always known that there could be something better than the life in their farm-house, while his mother did not. A different feeling came over him as he thought whom the other farm-house sheltered; he had looked for that first, to see if it were standing safe. Ruth's last letter had come only the day before. This Christmas holiday was to be a surprise to her. He wondered whether Ruth's father would let him in.

Never mind! he could sleep in the barn among the hay; and Ezra dropped into the snow again from the old tree-trunk and went his way. There was a small house just past a bend in the road, and he quickened his steps toward it. Alas! there was no smoke in Mrs. Powder's chimney. She was away on one of her visiting tours; nursing some sick person, perhaps. She would have housed him for the night most gladly; now he must take his chances in Law Lane.

The darkness was already beginning to fall; there was a curious brownness in the air, like summer twilight; the cold became sharper, and the young man shivered a little as he walked. He could not follow the left-hand road, where it led among hospitable neighbors, but turned bravely off toward his old home

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—a long, lonely walk at any time of the year, among woods and thickets all well known to him, and as familiar as they were to the wild creatures that haunted them. Yet Ezra Barnet did not find it easy to whistle as he went along.

Suddenly, from behind a scrub-oak that was heavily laden with dead leaves and snow, leaped a small figure, and Ezra was for the moment much startled. The boy carried a rabbit-trap with unusual care, and placed it on the snow-drift before which he stood waist-deep already. "Gorry, Ezry! you most scared me to pieces!" said Joel, in a perfectly calm tone. "Wish you Merry Christmas! Folks'll be lookin' for you; they didn't s'pose you'd git home before to-morrow, though."

"Looking for me?" repeated the young man, with surprise. "I didn't send no word——"

"Ain't you heard nothin' 'bout your ma'am's being took up for dead?"

"No, I ain't; and you aren't foolin' me with your stories, Joel Smith? You needn't play off any of your mischief onto me."

"What you gittin' mad with me about?" inquired Joel, with a plaintive tone in his voice. "She got a fall out in the barn this mornin', an' it liked to killed her. Most folks ain't heard nothin' 'bout it 'cause its been snowin' so. They come for Mis' Powder and she called out to our folks, as they brought her round by the way of Asa Packer's store to git some opodildack or somethin'."

Ezra asked no more questions, but strode past the boy, who looked after him a moment, and then lifted the heavy box-trap and started homeward. The imprisoned rabbit had been snowed up since the day before at least, and Joel felt humane anxieties, else he would have followed Ezra at a proper distance and learned something of his reception.

Mrs. Powder was reigning triumphant in the Barnet house, being nurse, housekeeper, and spiritual adviser all in one. She had been longing for an excuse to spend at least half a day under that cheerless roof for many months, but occasion had not offered. She found the responsibility of the parted lovers weighing more and more heavily on her mind, and had set her strong will at work to find some way of reuniting them, and even to restore a long-banished peace to the farms. She would not like to confess that a mild satisfaction caused her heart to feel warm and buoyant when an urgent summons had come at last; but such was the simple truth. A man who had been felling trees on the farm brought the news, melancholy to hear under other circumstances, that Mrs. Barnet had been hunting eggs in a stray nest in the hay-mow and had slipped to the floor and been taken up insensible. Bones were undoubtedly broken; she was a heavy woman, and had hardly recovered her senses. The doctor must be found as soon as possible. Mrs. Powder hastily put her house to rights and, with a good round bundle of what she called her needments, set forth on the welcome enterprise. On the way she could hardly keep herself from undue cheerfulness, and if ever there was likely to be a reassuring presence in a sick-room it was Harriet Powder's that December day.

She entered the gloomy kitchen looking like a two-footed snow-drift, her big round shoulders were so heaped with the damp white flakes. Old Ezra Barnet sat by the stove in utter despair, and waved a limp hand warningly toward the bed-room-door.

"She's layin' in a sog," he said, hopelessly. "I ought to thought to send word to pore Ezry—all the boy she ever had."

Mrs. Powder calmly removed her snowy outer garments and tried to warm her hands over the fire.

"Put in a couple o' sticks of good dry wood," she suggested, in a soothing voice; and the farmer felt his spirits brighten, he knew not why. Then the whole-souled, hearty woman walked into the bedroom.

"All I could see," she related afterward, "was the end of Jane Barnet's nose, and I was just as sure then as I be now that she was likely to continner; but I set down side of the bed and got holt of her hand, and she groaned two or three times real desperate. I wished the doctor was there, to see if anything really ailed her; but I someways knowed there wa'n't, 'less 'twas gittin' over such a jounce. I spoke to her, but she never

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said nothin', and I went back out into the kitchen. 'She's a very sick woman,' says I, loud enough for her to hear me; I knew 'twould please her. There was a good deal to do, and I put on my aprin you can trust me with anything you feel to say, sister Barnet.'

"She kind of opened her eye that was next to me and surveyed my countenance sharp, but I looked serious, and

and took right holt and begun to lay about me and git dinner; the men-folks was wiltin' for want o' somethin', it being nigh three o'clock. An' then I got Jane to feel more comfortable with ondressin' of her, for all she'd hardly let me touch of her—poor creatur', I expect she did feel sore!—and then daylight was failin' and I felt kind o' spent, so I set me down in a cheer by the bed-head and was speechless, too. I knew if she was able to speak she couldn't hold in no great spell longer.

"After awhile she stirred a little and groaned, and then says she, 'Ain't the doctor comin'?' and I peaced her up well's I could. 'Be I very bad off, Harri't?' says she.

"'We'll hope for the best, Jane,' says I; and that minute the notion come to me how I'd work her round, an' I like to laughed right out, but I didn't.

"If I should lose me again, you must see to sendin' for my son,' says she; 'his father's got no head.'

"'I will,' says I, real solemn. 'An' she groaned real honest. 'Be I like old Mis' Topliff?' she whispered, and I kind o' nodded an' put my hand up to my eyes. She *was* like her, too; some like her, but not nigh so bad, for Mis' Topliff was hurt so fallin' down the sullar-stairs that she never got over it an' died the day after.

"'Oh, my sakes!' she bu'st out whinin', 'I can't be took away now. I ain't a-goin' to die right off, be I, Mis' Powder?'

"'I aint the one to give ye hope. In the midst of life we are in death. We ain't sure of the next minute, none of us,' says I, meanin' it general, but discoursin' away like an old book o' sermons.

"'I do feel kind o' failin', now,' says she. 'Oh, can't you do nothin'?'—and I come over an' set on the foot o' the bed an' looked right at her. I knew she was a dreadful notional woman, and always made a fuss when anything was the matter with her; couldn't bear no kind o' pain.

"'Sister Barnet,' says I, 'don't you bear nothin' on your mind you'd like to

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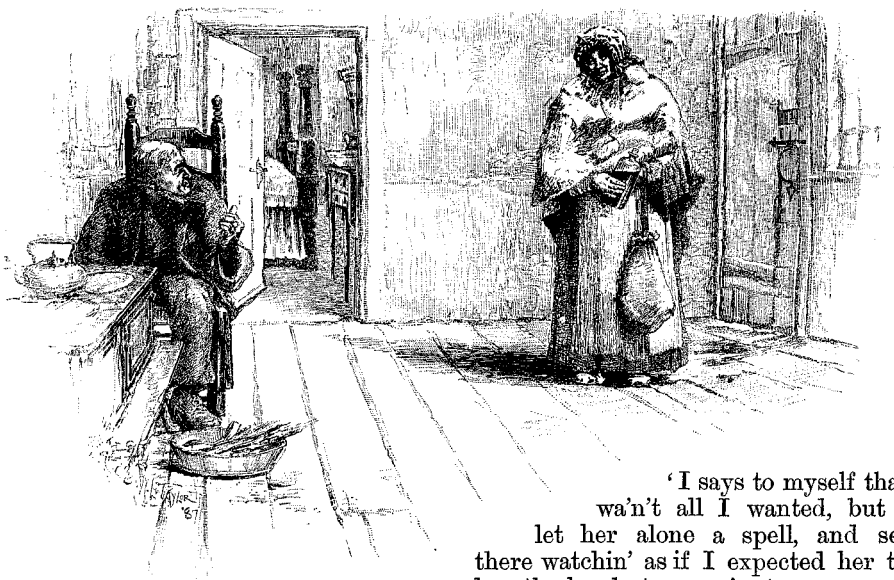
see righted before you go? I know you ain't been at peace with Crosby's folks, and 'tain't none o' my business, but I shouldn't want to be called away with hard feelin's in *my* heart. You must overlook my speaking right out, but I should want to be so used myself.'

"Poor old creatur'! She had an awful fight of it, but she beat her temper for once an' give in. 'I do forgive all them Crosbys,' says she, an' rolled up her eyes.



'I says to myself that wa'n't all I wanted, but I let her alone a spell, and set there watchin' as if I expected her to breathe her last any minute.

"She asked for Barnet, and I said he was anxious and out watchin' for the doctor, now the snow'd stopped. 'I wish I could see Ezra,' says she. 'I'm all done with the lane now, and I'd keep the peace if I was goin' to live.' Her voice got weak, and I didn't know but she was worse off than I s'posed. I was scared for a minute, and then I took a grain o' hope. I'd watched by too many dyin'-beds not to know the difference.

"'Don't ye let Barnet git old Nevins to make my coffin, will ye, Mis' Powder?' says she once.

"'He's called a good workman, ain't he?' says I, soothin' as I could. When it come to her givin' funeral orders, 'twas more'n I could do to hold in.

"'I ain't goin' snappin' through torment in a hemlock coffin, to please that old cheat!' says she, same's if she was well, an' ris' right up in bed; and then her bruises pained her an' she dropped back on the pillow.

"'Oh, I'm a-goin' now!' says she. 'I've been an awful hard woman. 'Twas I put Barnet up to the worst on't. I'm willin' Ezra should marry Ruthy Crosby; she's a nice, pooty gal, and I never owned it till now I'm on my dyin'-bed—Oh, I'm a-goin', I'm a-goin'!—Ezra can marry her, and the two farms together'll make the best farm in town. Barnet ain't got no fight left; he's like an old sheep since we drove off Ezra.' And then she'd screech; you never saw no such a fit of narves. And the end was I had to send to Crosby's, in all the snow, for them to come over.

"An' Barnet was got in to hold her hand and hear last words enough to make a Fourth o' July speech; and I was sent out to the door to hurry up the Crosbys, and who should come right out o' the dark but Ezra. I declare, when I see him you could a-knocked me down with a feather. But I got him by the sleeve—'You hide away a spell,' says I, 'till I set the little lamp in this winder; an' don't you make the best o' your ma's condition; 'pear just as consarned about her as

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you can. I'll let ye know why, soon's we can talk'—and I shoved him right out an' shut the door.

"The groans was goin' on, and in come Crosby and Ruth, lookin' scared about to death themselves. Neither on 'em had ever been in that house before, as I know of. She called 'em into the bedroom and said she'd had hard feelin's towards them and wanted to make peace before she died, and both on 'em shook hands with her.

"'Don't you want to tell Ruth what you said to me about her and Ezry?' says I, whisperin' over the bed. ''Live or dead, you know 'tis right and best.'

"'There ain't no half way 'bout me,' she says, and so there wa'n't. 'Ruth,' says she, out loud, 'I want you to tell pore Ezra that I gave ye both my blessin',' and I made two steps acrost that kitchen and set the lamp in the window, and in comes Ezra—pore boy, he didn't know what was brewin', and thought his mother was dyin' certain when he saw the Crosbys goin' in.

"He went an' stood beside the bed, an' his father clutched right holt of him. Thinks I to myself, if you make as edifyin' an end when your time really does come, you may well be thankful, Jane Barnet!

"They was all a-weepin', an' I was weepin' myself, if you'll believe it, I'd got a-goin' so. You ought to seen her take holt o' Ruth's hand an' Ezra's an' put 'em together. *Then* I'd got all I wanted, I tell you. An' after she'd screeched two or three times more she it; so I beckoned 'em out into the kitchen an' went in an' set with her alone. She dropped off into a good easy sleep, an' I told the folks her symptoms was more encouragin'.

"I tell you, if ever I took handsome care o' any sick person 'twas Jane Barnet, before she got about again; an' Ruth she used to come over an' help real willin'. She got holt of her ma'-in-law's bunnit one afternoon an' trimmed it up real tasty, and that pleased Mis' Barnet about to death. My conscience pricked me some, but not a great sight. I'm willin' to take what blame come to me by rights.

"The doctor come postin' along, late that night, and said she was doin' well, owin' to the care she'd had, and give me a wink. And she's alive yet," Mrs. Powder always assured her friends, triumphantly—"and, what's more, is middlin' peaceable disposed. She's said one or two p'inted things to me, though, an' I shouldn't wonder, come to think it over, if she mistrusted me just the least grain. But, dear sakes! they never was so comfortable in their lives; an' Ezra he got a first-rate bargain for a lot o' Crosby's woodland that the railroad wanted, and peace is kind o' set in amon'st 'em up in Law Lane."

V.

When Ezra Barnet waked on Christmas morning, in his familiar, dark little

begun to git tired; the pore old creatur' was shook up dreadful, and I felt for her consid'able, though you may not think

chamber under the lean-to roof, he could hardly believe that he was at home again, and that such strange things had

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happened. There were cheerful voices in the kitchen below, and he dressed hurriedly and went down-stairs.

There was Mrs. Powder, cooking the breakfast with lavish generosity, and beaming with good-nature. Barnet, the father, was smiling and looking on with pleased anticipation; the sick woman was comfortably bolstered up in the bedroom. In all his life the son had never felt so drawn to his mother; there was a new look in her eyes as he went toward her; she had lost her high color, and looked at him pleadingly, as she never had done before. "Ezry, come close here!" said she. "I believe I'm goin' to git about ag'in, after all. Mis' Powder says I be; but them feelin's I had slippin' down the mow, yesterday, was twice as bad as the thump I struck with. I may never be the same to work, but I ain't goin' to fight with folks no more, sence the Lord'll let me live a spell longer. I ain't a-goin' to fight with nobody, no matter how bad I want to. Now, you go an' git you a good breakfast. I ain't eat a mouthful since breakfast yesterday, and you can bring me a help o' anything Sister Powder favors my havin'."

"I hope 'twill last," muttered Sister Powder to herself, as she heaped the blue plate. "Wish you all a Merry Christmas!" she said. "I like to forgot my manners."

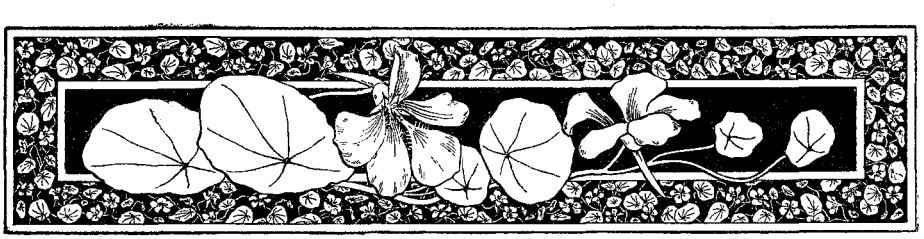
It was Christmas Day, whether anybody in Law Lane remembered it or not. The sun shone bright on the sparkling snow, the eaves were dropping, and the snow-birds and blue-jays came about the door. The wars of Law Lane were ended.

GOD'S COMFORTER.

By S. Decatur Smith, Jr.

WHAT time the Christ to Calvary was led
And hung all bleeding on the cross of shame,
While frenzied hordes reviled and mocked His name,
O'er thorns the golden aureole's flame was shed.
When o'er His face death's deadly pallor spread
And one great cry of anguish shook His frame,
On rapid wing a pitying robin came,
And fluttered sorrowful about His head.

From out the wounded brow, with eager beak,
The robin plucked a thorn, when, like a tear,
Upon its breast one drop of life-blood fell.
And even now the blessed brand will speak,
From every robin's bosom, of the dear
And tender pity that He knew so well.



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IN DICKENS-LAND.

By Edwin Percy Whipple.

THE reason that everybody likes novels is, that everybody is more or less a novelist. In addition to the practical life that men and women lead, constantly vexed, as it is, by obstructive facts, there is an interior life which they *imagine*, in which facts smoothly give way to sentiments, ideas, and aspirations. In this imagined existence people strengthen themselves with new faculties, exalt themselves with new passions, surround themselves with new companions, devote themselves to new objects. They are richer, handsomer, braver, wittier, nobler, more disinterested, more adventurous, more efficient, than they are in their actual personalities and mode of living. They construct long stories, long as their own lives, of which they are the heroes or heroines; and the novels they best like to read are those whose scenes and characters best fit into the novel they are themselves incessantly weaving. The universality of self-esteem is probably due to the fact that people confuse the possibilities of their existence with its actualities. Each being the hero of "My Novel," gains self-importance in virtue of *that;* and while externally classed with the "nobodies," is internally conscious of ranking with the "somebodies." Burn out of a man, indeed, everything else—sense, sensibility, and conscience—you will still find alive in his ashes a little self-conceit and a little imagination. "How much do you weigh?" a man was asked. "Well," he replied, "ordinarily, only a hundred and twenty pounds; but when I'm mad, I weigh a ton!" But the great increase of weight arises when a person is kindled with a conception of what he has a possibility of becoming.

It is evident that, as these novel-spinning factories are in full operation in all heads, the only check on their written production is the necessity for some talent for narrative and some knack in composition. Hence, in the first place, a swarm of romancers, who have properly no place in literature, and who represent every variety of mediocrity, from the fussy and furious dead-level of sensationalism to the tame and timid dead-level of conventionality. Some put blood in their ink, some water, but it must be said that in these matters blood is not always thicker than water. Rise a step above this level; introduce some art in the plot and some truth in the characterization; keep as close to actual life as a photographer; be as diffuse and dogged in details as is consistent with preserving a kind of languid interest; economize material, whether of incident or emotion; realize Carlyle's sarcasm that England contains twenty millions of people, mostly bores—and you have Anthony Trollope, the most unromantic of romancers, popular in virtue of his skill in reproducing a population. Vitalize this dull reality by vivid feeling; put passion into everything; eliminate all that does not stimulate; be as fruitful in incidents as Trollope is in commonplaces; envelop the reader in a whirl of events; drag him violently on through a series of minor unexpected catastrophes to the grand unexpected catastrophe at the end; heap stimulants on him until he feels like a mad Malay running amuck through the streets—and you have Charles Reade, the great master of melodramatic effect. This social life which Trollope does not penetrate, which Reade exaggerates, look at it with a curious, sceptical eye, sharpened by a wearied heart; be superior to all the fine illusions of existence, by defect of spiritual insight as well as by subtilty of external observation; lay bare all the hypocrisies and rascalities of "proper" people, without losing faith in the possibility of virtue; survey men and women in their play rather than in their real struggle and work; bring all the resources of keen observation, incisive wit, and delicate humor to the task of exhibiting the frailties of humanity, with-

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out absolutely teaching that it is hopelessly vicious and effete—and you have Thackeray, a kindly man of genius, honestly forced by his peculiar intellect and experience to inculcate the dreadful doctrine that life does not pay. Add Thackeray's sharp and bright perception to Trollope's nicety in detail, and supplement both with large scholarship and wide reach of philosophic insight; conceive a person who looks, not only *at* life and *into* life, but *through* it, who sympathizes with the gossip of peasants and the principles of advanced thinkers, who is as capable of reproducing Fergus O'Conner as John Stuart Mill, and is as blandly tolerant of Garrison as of Hegel—and you have the wonderful woman who called herself George Eliot, probably the largest mind among the romancers of the century, but with an incurable sadness at the depth of her nature which deprives her of the power to cheer the readers she interests and informs.

It may here be said that, in a peculiar and restricted domain of imagination, the great American novelist, Nathaniel Hawthorne, has fairly outmatched all his English brethren. He is the Jonathan Edwards of the imaginative representation of life, as Thackeray is its Hume. He teaches with vivid distinctness the doctrine of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin." Scott once said that there were depths in human nature which it was unhealthy to attempt to sound, and it is in attempting to sound these that Hawthorne has exhibited his most marvellous gifts of insight and characterization. In the subtlety and accuracy, the penetration and sureness, of his glance into the morbid phenomena of the human soul; in exhibiting the operation of the most delicate laws of attraction and repulsion which human natures can experience; in the capacity to terrify his readers with the consciousness of their latent possibilities for evil, so that they shrink from his pitiless exposures "like guilty things surprised"—he makes novelists like Thackeray and Dickens appear relatively superficial; but, as Scott had foretold, the representation is too ghostly and ghastly to give that degree of artistic pleasure which is the condition of a novelist's complete success with the public.

Each of these novelists has a particular class of appreciative readers whose individual experience of life they specially meet. But there are two romancers, Scott and Dickens, who are liked and loved by everybody, because, by the happiness of their natures as well as the force of their genius, they are radiators of *cheer*, and communicate the most delicious imaginative *enjoyment*. Different in many important respects, they agree in that last and inmost felicity of genius of being universally *attractive*. They are the only novelists who have succeeded in domesticating their creations in *all* imaginations as real human beings, whose wit or wisdom, whose joys or sorrows, whose hates or loves, we refer to as confidently as Mrs. Gamp did to her dear, ideal Mrs. Harris—more real to the eye of her mind than the Betsey Prig she daily beheld in superabundant flesh.

To achieve this miracle Dickens must not only have had exceptional powers of observation and imagination, but *extra*ordinary intensity of sympathy with *ordinary* feelings and beliefs. His genius in characterization tends to the grotesque and extravagant; his personages, in their names as in their qualities, produce on us the effect of strangeness; the plots of the novels in which they appear would with any other characters seem grossly improbable, and yet his mind is unmistakably rooted in common sense and common humanity. He thus succeeds in giving his readers all the pleasure which comes from contemplating what is strange, odd, and eccentric, without disquieting them by any paradoxes in morals or shocking them by any perversions of homely natural sentiment. The "Christmas Carol," for example, is as wild in grotesque fancy as a dream of Hoffmann, yet in feeling as solid and sweet and humane as a sermon of Channing. It impresses us somewhat as we are impressed by the sight of the Bible as illustrated by Gustave Doré. Thus held fast to common, homely truths and feelings by his sentiments, he can safely give reins to his imagination in his creations. The keenest of observers, both of things and persons, all that he observes is still taken up and transformed by his imagination—becomes *Dickens*-

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ized, in fact—so that, whether he describes a landscape, or a boot-jack, or a building, or a man, we see the object, not as it is in itself, but as it is deliciously bewitched by his method of looking at it. Everything is suggested by his outward experience, but modified by his inward experience. The result is that we do not have in him an exact transcript of life, but an individualized ideal of life from his point of view. He has, in short, discovered and colonized one of the waste districts of Imagination, which we may call Dickens-land or Dickens-ville; from his own brain he has peopled it with some fourteen hundred persons, and it agrees with the settlements made there by Shakespeare and Scott in being better known than such geographical countries as Canada and Australia, and it agrees with them equally in confirming us in the belief of the *reality* of a population which has no *actual* existence. It is distinguished from all other colonies in Brainland by the ineffaceable peculiarities of its colonizer; its inhabitants don't die like other people, but, alas! they also now can't increase; but whithersoever any of them may wander they are recognized at once, by an unmistakable birthmark, as belonging to the race of Dickens. A man who has done this is not merely one of a thousand, but one of a thousand millions; for he has created an ideal population which is more interesting to human beings than the great body of their own actual friends and neighbors.

And how shall I describe this population, so numerous and so various?

It must, of course, be divided into classes; and its most general division is into humane people and malignant people. The one test of merit in Dickensland is goodness of heart; and it contains a considerable number of highly esteemed persons in whom this quality is connected with confusion of head. No other novelist ever drew so many fools and half-witted people and drew them so humanely. There, for example, is poor Miss Flite, the crazed suitor in the Court of Chancery, who has discovered that the sixth seal mentioned in the Revelations is the Great Seal of the Lord Chancellor, and who expects a judgment in her case on the Day of Judgment. There is Miss Betsey Trotwood's friend, Mr. Dick, with *his* head hopelessly troubled and intermixed with that of King Charles the First, and listening to Dr. Strong's learned dissertations "with his poor wits wandering, God knows where, on the wings of hard words." Add a little conscious brain, so that the heart can stutter into half-intelligent expression, and you have what Susan Nipper calls "that innocentest creeter Toots." This young gentleman, as you remember, had been subjected to Dr. Blimber's forcing system in education, but "had stopped off blowing one day, and remained in the school a mere stalk;" and who "when he began to have whiskers left off having brains." When he comes into his property he hires a set of apartments, employs a prize-fighter, called the Game Chicken, to complete his education as a gentleman, and falls in love with Florence Dombey. The attachment proves hopeless, and he becomes a prey to Byronic despair. "The state of my feelings toward Miss Dombey," he says to Captain Cuttle, "is of that unspeakable description that my heart is a desert island, and she lives in it alone. I'm getting more used up every day, and I'm proud to be so. If you could see my legs when I take my boots off, you'd form some idea of what unrequited affection is. I have been prescribed bark, but I don't take it, for I don't wish to have any tone whatever given to my constitution. I'd rather not. The hollow crowd when they see me with the Chicken, and characters of distinction like that, suppose me to be happy; but I'm wretched."

Dickens makes Toots, indeed, as ridiculous a creature as can well be conceived, but then he makes him as lovable as he is laughable. The readers of "Dombey and Son" feel that he is of infinitely more importance than the haughty Edith or the keen and cunning Carker of that wonderful novel; for he has a good heart under his stammering brain, and Dickens, in such matters, agrees with his own John Chivery, who says of his foolish son: "My son has a 'art, and my son's 'art is in the right place. Me and his mother knows where to find it, and we find it sitiwated correct."

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Next above the half-witted we have the stupid characters of Dickens—characters in whom stupidity, however, is, as it is in nature, blended with self-importance. Such are old Joe Willet, Barkis, Jack Bunsby, Mr. F.'s Aunt, and the rest. Intellect just twinkles in them, like a fire-fly in the dark. "That chap, sir," says Mr. Willet, speaking of Hugh, "though he has all his faculties about him, somewheres or another, bottled-up and corked-down, has no more imagination than Barnaby has. And why hasn't he? Because they never was drawed out of him when he was a boy. That's why. What would any of us have been, if our fathers hadn't drawed our faculties out of us? What would my boy Joe have been, if I hadn't drawed his faculties out of him?"

Again, the liquor-steeped Durdles, in "Edwin Drood," employs the boy-imp, Deputy, to stone him home, when he is out after ten o'clock at night, and takes great credit on himself for thus giving the boy an object in life. "What was he before?" he says, with "the slow gravity of beery soddenness." "A Destroyer. What work did he do? Nothing but destruction. What did he earn by it? Short terms in Cloisterham jail. Not a person, not a piece of property, not a winder, not a horse, nor a dog, nor a cat, nor a bird, nor a fowl, nor a pig, but what he stoned, for want of an enlightened object. I put that enlightened object before him, and now he can turn his honest half-penny by the three penn'orth a week." "I wonder he has no competitors," says Mr. Jasper. "He has plenty," answers Mr. Durdles, "but he stones 'em all away."

Then there is that inscrutable old woman, Mr. F.'s Aunt, in "Little Dorrit," who has such a benevolent desire that Arthur Clennam shall be "brought for'ard," in order that she may "chuck him out o' winder;" who sits down in the pie-shop with the inexorable purpose not to move until the "chucking" process has been accomplished, and who subjects her companion to some embarrassment in consequence of "an idle rumor which circulated among the credulous infants of the neighborhood, to the effect that the old lady had sold herself to the pie-shop to be made up, and was then sitting in the pie-shop parlor declining to complete her contract."

Connected with this class of characters is a class in which conceit carries stupidity to an elevation quite ideal. Sim Tappertit, Mr. Kenwigs, Mr. Sapsea, may be cited as its representatives. Where is the person so fortunate as *not* to have met Mr. Sapsea, or somebody who strongly suggested him—the man who gives a certain grandeur to his fat-wittedness, who is heroically dull and majestically insensible, and whose conceit could hardly be blasted out of him by the heaviest charge of nitro-glycerine? Thinking, in his condescending almightiness, that it is not good for man to be alone, he cast his eye about him for a nuptial partner, whose mind might be absorbed in his own. That eye, thus cast about him, fell on Miss Brobity. "Miss Brobity's being, young man," he says to Mr. Jasper, "was deeply imbued with homage to Mind. She revered Mind, when launched, or, as I say, precipitated, on an extensive knowledge of the world. When I made my proposal, she did me the honor to be so overshadowed with a species of Awe as to be able to articulate only the two words, 'O, Thou!'—meaning myself, . . . and, though encouraged to proceed, she never did proceed a word further." Mrs. Sapsea, thus courted, soon dies of "a feeble action of the liver," and to the very last addressed her august spouse—playing Jove to her Semele—in the same unfinished terms of "O, Thou!" And perhaps the most audacious stroke of Dickens's extravagant humor is found in the inscription which Mr. Sapsea places on her monument.

We do no injustice to that "fool positive," Mr. Sapsea, in saying we make an ascent in the mental scale in proceeding to consider fools after the fashion of Mrs. Nickleby. She is the type of a class, very numerous in actual life, whose minds are run away with by the accidental association of ideas; who have thoughts, but no power of directing their thoughts. Flora Casby, in "Little Dorrit," with her unpunctuated velocity of incoherent talk, belongs to the same general class. So does Mr. Sparkler, whose stunted brain stammers under the weight of his admiration for persons

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who have "no nonsense in them"—in his case a purely disinterested and pathetic tribute to all human beings who do not share his special defect. So does the poor little Barnacle of the Circumlocution Office, who is so shocked by Arthur Clennam's coming into the office with a demand to "know" something about the matters which the Department was theoretically instituted to explain. Everyone remembers the scene at Pet Meagles's marriage with Henry Gowan, in which this young Barnacle testifies his horror and indignation, "to two vapid young gentlemen, his relatives," at the presence of Arthur at the feast. "There was a feller here, look here, who had come to our Department without an appointment and said he wanted to know, you know; and that, look here, if he was to break out now, as he might, you know (for you never could tell what an ungentlemanly Radical of that sort would be up to next), and was to say, look here, that he wanted to know this moment, you know, that would be jolly—wouldn't it?"

So does "the young man by the name of Guppy," in "Bleak House." He is an attorney's clerk, who, in proposing to Esther Summerson, "files a declaration;" who represents his mother as eminently calculated, by her virtues, to be a mother-in-law; and who, with vast self-esteem, and desire to strike everybody he meets with an impression of his superior magnanimity and intelligence, is forced by his nature to demean himself like the wretched snob he is—belonging, as he does, to that family of fools in which the natural variety of the species blends with another variety which it would be profanity to name.

It is difficult to say where, in Dickens, the humorist ends and the satirist begins, but there are in his works whole classes of character in which the satirist evidently predominates. His method of assailing social and political abuses is to make them ridiculous or hateful, and he makes them ridiculous or hateful by impersonating them in men and women. We quote them as we quote a jest or bright saying—not as characters, but as epigrams endowed with individuality. His humorous personages spring from his sympathies, his satirical ones from his antipathies; and antipathy never gives us the whole and inward truth about anybody, but makes us exaggerate the trait we dislike until the individual is all merged in his particular defect. The popularity of such characters in Dickens is due to the fact that they reflect popular prejudices, and never go beyond that perception of externals which is our easy, intolerant way of judging the people we despise or detest. The intellectual limitations of Dickens are also revealed in his satirical sketches. His heart is developed out of all proportion to his brain. The abuses of a system blind his eyes to its merits and its purpose. He is a reformer, but a reformer whose commonsense is unaccompanied with comprehensive intelligence, and whose moral sense frequently impels him to be practically unjust. Nobody who is carried away by his delicious satire on the Barnacles and their "Circumlocution Office" stops to think that the Circumlocution Office is simply the introduction of *method* into the transaction of public business—a system which, with all its defects, is the only contrivance ever devised by human wit to check scoundrelism in official place. Nobody who is carried away by his satire on the delays in chancery stops to think that the Court of Chancery with all its abuses, means equity jurisprudence, and that equity jurisprudence, in distinction from the common law, is one of the few things in insular England in which the principles of universal reason and universal justice have been fairly applied.

The novel of "Hard Times" is a satire on political economy, of which Dickens knew little, and the little he knew offended his benevolent feelings—as if the law of gravitation itself did not frequently offend benevolent feeling! Still, Mr. Gradgrind will for generations prevent a large number of amiable people from admitting the demonstrations of Adam Smith and Ricardo. One sometimes feels, in reflecting on the immense influence exerted by Dickens on matters requiring, for their adequate treatment, wide knowledge and philosophic largeness of mind, that it is a great pity he did not receive in youth a systematic

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education, which would have given him the austere mental training which, with all his genius, he so evidently lacked. We are occasionally reminded, in reading him, of Tony Weller's reply to Mr. Pickwick's praise of the intelligence of his son Sam: "Werry glad to hear of it, sir," he says. "I took a great deal o' pains in his eddication, sir; let him run the streets when he was werry young, sir, and shift for himself. It's the only way to make a boy sharp, sir." Undoubtedly what Dickens picked up in "running the streets" was precious to literature. Undoubtedly he saw much that legislators, statesmen, and thinkers neglect. But it would have been better, when he invaded their province, if he had known more than he did of the subjects that occupied their activity. The fatal defect of his judgment was that he could not fairly represent any system of administration or government, of philanthropy or theology, which worked what he considered injustice or wrong in individual cases. Now, God alone, with an eternity to operate in, can deal with such exceptional cases. Imperfect human beings can, at the best, only frame systems which have a tendency to do the greatest good to the greatest number. As a humorist, Dickens is as tolerant as nature is; as a satirist, he is, in spirit, almost as intolerant, though in a different way, as Carlyle himself. He has not the Shakespearean toleration—the toleration which comes from immense force and reach and fairness of mind, as well as from goodness and tenderness of heart.

But, waiving these considerations, and coming down to the real talent of Dickens in looking at these things from his own point of view, we have a crowd of shadowy characters which are indisputably inhabitants of Dickens-land. There is the whole family of the Barnacles, born to receive salaries and shirk work, preaching and living the gospel of "How not to do it." There is Lord Lancaster Stiltstalking, "who had been maintained by the Circumlocution Office for many years as a representative of the Britannic Majesty abroad." This "noble Refrigerator had iced several European courts in his time, and had done it with such complete success that the very name of Englishman yet struck cold to the stomachs of foreigners who had the distinguished honor of remembering *him*, at the distance of a quarter of a century." At the festive board he "shaded the dinner, cooled the wines, chilled the gravy, and blighted the vegetables."

Then there is the class of professional philanthropists, Mrs. Jellyby, Mrs. Pardiggle, and Messrs. Quale, Gusher, and Honeythunder, caricatures which express one of the most persistent of Dickens's antipathies. Remember poor rueful Mr. Jellyby adjuring his daughter Caddy, when she was to marry young Mr. Turveydrop, not to have a "mission." Unless, he says, you mean with all your heart to strive to make a home for your husband, "you had better murder him than marry him." And, then recurring to the disorders of his own home, owing to Mrs. Jellyby's absorption in Borrioboola-Gha, he calls his neglected children "wild Indians," and declares "that he was sensible the best thing that could happen to them was, their being all Tomahawked together."

Then there is the class to which the Rev. Mr. Chadband belongs—impersonated satires on clerical defects and bigotries, which some clergymen have been so injudicious as to denounce as attacks on religion. Mr. Chadband is "a large yellow man, with a fat smile," a greasy paw, and with "a general appearance of having a good deal of train-oil in his system." His eloquence consists in "piling verbose flights of stairs," one upon another. His sermon on what he calls "Terewth," elicited by the boy Jo on his appearance in Mr. Snagsby's house, is a masterpiece of its kind. "O my juvenile friends," he exclaims, "if the master of this house was to go forth into the city and there see an eel, and was to come back, and was to call untoe him the mistress of this house, and was to say, 'Sarah, rejoice with me, for I have seen an elephant!' would *that* be Terewth?"

In the same class of impersonated sarcasms we must rank his hits, in "Martin Chuzzlewit," on our *American* declaimers, swindlers, and charlatans. They are caricatures—but, then, what good caricatures! Not to speak of Mr. Jefferson Brick and Colonel Diver, of the

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"Rowdy Journal," how delightful is Elijah Pogram, "honorable" in virtue of his being a member of Congress. The Hon. Elijah's eulogy on the rascal Chollop must remind us of many specimens of Western eloquence. "Our fellow-countryman is a model of a man, quite fresh from Natur's mould!" said Pogram, with enthusiasm. "He is a true-born child of this free hemisphere! Verdant as the mountains of our country; bright and flowing as our Mineral Licks; unsp'iled by withering conventionalities as air our broad and boundless Perearers! Rough he may be. So air our Barrs. Wild he may be. So air our Buffalers. But he is a child of Natur', and a child of Freedom; and his boastful answer to the Despot and Tyrant is, that his bright home is in the settin' sun!" This is perhaps only a heightened representation of the way in which some of our politicians make the American eagle scream!

Now, the difference between characters like these and real men and women is that they have no *internal* vitality and individuality. In short, they have no souls. Dickens's force of imagination is such that he easily succeeds in personifying them; but he easily succeeds, also, in personifying streets, buildings, landscapes, furniture—everything, in short, he touches. It is so difficult, in this brief survey, to mention, even by name, scores of the true characters which enliven his books, that the deduction we make is comparatively of slight importance. Among those characters who have essential individuality, Tony Weller and Mrs. Gamp stand out as perhaps the best examples of solid characterization in Dickens's works. What they say is deliciously humorous, but what they *are* is more humorous still. The same, to a less extent, may be said of Sam Weller, Squeers, Wilkins Micawber, esquire, Captain Ed'ard Cuttle, Mr. Crummles, Mr. and Mrs. Boffin; of the wonderful series of boys, from Master Wackford Squeers all the way up to the "baby-devil" Deputy, in "Edwin Drood," and that perfection of urchin impudence, Bailey, Junior, in "Martin Chuzzlewit;" of the dilapidated young gentlemen distinguished for their flow of spirits, animal and alcoholic, represented by Bob Sawyer, Mr. Chuckster, and Mr. Richard Swiveller; and of oddities and "originals" of all kinds, such as Newman Noggs, Tim Linkinwater, Mr. Cruncher, Durdles, Mr. Venus, Mr. Wegg, Mr. Boythorn. It is useless, in such an embarrassment of riches, to attempt specification. They are all, more or less, *overcharged*, as though the author was a little intoxicated with his own humorous conception, and could not keep himself within any measure; but they are still all *alive*. Of the novels in which they appear, "The Pickwick Papers" are the most animated and joyous, inspired, as they are, by the very genius of fun; "David Copperfield" is the most delightful, various, and satisfying of stories; "Dombey and Son" is the freshest and most vital throughout in style, description, and characterization; and "The Tale of Two Cities" is the most intense, passionate, and "entertaining" of narratives.

In all the novels, the characters can hardly be detached from the scenes and incidents in which they appear without a loss in ludicrous effect. Still, let me quote a few sentences in which what they *are* flashes through what they *say*. Mr. Sam Weller, on first encountering the fat boy, accosts him with the question, "You a'n't got nothing on your mind, as makes you fret yourself, have you?" "Not as I knows on," replies the boy. "I should rather ha' thought," says Sam, "*to look at you*, that you was a-laborin' under an unrequited attachment to some young 'ooman."

Mrs. Todgers fears that "that dreadful child," Bailey, junior, has been so spoilt by the gentlemen of her boarding-house "that nothing but hanging will ever do him any good." Mrs. Gamp gives, as her opinion, that "there's nothin' he don't know. All the wickedness of the world is Print to him." "Reether so," retorts Bailey, junior, "adjusting his cravat." And then, he confesses critically to Poll Sweedlepipe, "there's the remains of a fine woman about Sairy—hey, Paul?" "Drat the Bragian boldness of that boy!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "I wouldn't be that creetur's mother, not for fifty pound." "Excuge," she says, in reference to this same Poll Sweedlepipe, the barber, "ex-

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cuge the weakness of the man, . . . which not a blessed hour ago he nearly shaved the noge off from the father of as lovely a family as ever, Mr. Chuzzlewit, was born three sets of twins, and would have done it, only he see it a-goin' in the glass and dodged the rager."

Mr. Sapsea, in "Edwin Drood," thus discriminates between equity and legality. "It is not enough," he says, "that Justice should be morally certain; she must be *immorally* certain—legally, that is."

Mr. Micawber, who is the prey of pecuniary difficulties, and who is always waiting for something to "turn up," has a family in every way worthy of him. "My mamma," said Mrs. Micawber, "departed this life before Mr. Micawber's difficulties commenced, or at least before they became pressing. My papa lived to bail Mr. Micawber several times, and then expired, regretted by a numerous circle." "My piece of advice to you, Copperfield," says Mr. Micawber, "you know. Annual income, twenty pounds; annual expenditure, nineteen nineteen six; result, happiness. Annual income, twenty pounds; annual expenditure, twenty pounds ought and six; result, misery. The blossum is blighted, the leaf is withered, the God of day goes down on the dreary scene, and—and, in short, you are forever floored. As I am!"

How many so-called accomplished women of the world are hit in this picture of Mrs. Merdle! She "had large, unfeeling, handsome eyes, and dark, unfeeling, handsome hair, and a broad, unfeeling, handsome bosom."

"I am," says Mr. Vincent Crummles, "in the theatrical profession myself; my wife is in the theatrical profession; I had a dog that lived and died in it from a puppy; and my chaise-pony goes on, in 'Timour the Tartar.'"

When Mrs. Crupp, David Copperfield's landlady, has her house invaded by Miss Betsey Trotwood, she vehemently expresses her determination to assert her rights before "a British Judy." Mr. Wegg, when he charges Mr. Boffin more for reading poetry to him than for reading prose, justifies the exaction on the ground that when "a person comes to grind off poetry night after night, it is but right he should expect to be paid for its weakening effect on his mind." When Mr. Squeers is drunk he goes to bed, not only with his boots on, but with his umbrella under his arm. When Arthur Clennam, ruined by speculation and utterly crushed in spirit, says to Mr. Rugg, his attorney, that he only cares for the money left with him in trust, and not for his own, Mr. Rugg expresses an unmistakable professional surprise at such extraordinary delicacy of feeling. "I have," he says, "generally found in my experience that it's their own money people are most particular about. I have seen people get rid of a good deal of other people's money, and bear it very well; very well, indeed."

A word may be said here in regard to the *critical* charge against Dickens, that he preserves the individuality of his characters by the cheap contrivance of constantly repeating some mere external peculiarity. Mr. Snagsby always prefaces anything he has to say with a slight, deprecatory cough behind his raised hand. Uriah Heep is always "'umble." Mr. Jarndyce's "East Wind" becomes in the end painfully monotonous. Mr. Tony Weller's fear of the machinations of "widdurs" tires at last on the critical sense of humor. Mrs. Merdle's "Bosom" is so obtrusively prominent that it submerges Mrs. Merdle herself in a physical trait. The objection is just, but still the defect belongs to Dickens's method of characterization. He repeats these things as the experienced preacher constantly repeats his text, in order to deepen its effect on the popular mind. As long as Dickens makes his characters really *alive*, in internal individuality as well as in external peculiarity, the defect is but superficial.

The villains in Dickens's novels are not favorable specimens of the class from which Shakespeare and Scott drew some of their grandest creations. All his villains are essentially low villains and utter villains; but experience, history, and Shakespeare prove that villains are commonly the most complicated of all characters, and require the greatest subtlety and depth of dramatic insight to be

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adequately represented and *explained*. Dickens's villains, Quilp, Carker, Arthur Gride, Jonas Chuzzlewit, Ralph Nickleby, Blandois, and the rest, are simply hideous, and belong, not to literature, but to the criminal courts. Though he devotes to them much of his strongest, most elaborate, and most ambitious writing, he never succeeds in making them artistically justifiable. Total depravity is not admissible in romance; and Dickens professes to draw his villains as totally depraved. What, he says, in "Edwin Drood"—the last work he wrote—could a virtuous mind "know of the criminal intellect, which its own professed students perpetually misread, because they persist in trying to reconcile it with the average intellect of average men, instead of identifying it as a horrible wonder apart?" And as to the criminal heart under this criminal intellect, he has expressed a sufficiently despairing opinion through the lips of the honest landlady who denounces Blandois, the leading villain of "Little Dorrit." I know nothing, she says, "of philosophic philanthropy." But this I know, that "there are people whom it is necessary to detest without compromise. There are people who must be dealt with as enemies of the human race. There are people (men and women both, unfortunately) who have no good in them—none. There are people who have in them no human heart, and must be crushed like savage beasts and cleared out of the way."

Individually, I may agree with this judgment, and think that the hangman is doing the most useful of all works in launching such existences into nonexistence. Kill them by all means, but don't do what Dickens does—don't make them prominent characters in the ideal realm of tragedy and romance.

The pathos of Dickens is no less effective than his humor; perhaps he draws tears even more easily than he provokes laughter. He makes everybody cry—even his hostile critics; but his critics object that they are made to cry against the rules, that it is sentimentality they cry over and not true sentiment, that it is exceedingly unnatural thus to have their natures so deeply stirred. Dickens took their tears as the most cogent of all answers to their maxims, and went on with his work, forcing them to weep, and disregarding the snarling protest they made against the magician who extorted from them such irrepressible drops of uncritical emotion. Still, the critics were not altogether wrong in saying that while his humor always cheered, his pathos frequently enfeebled. Vigorous manly and womanly will to do practical benevolent work is apt to be dissolved in such tears as Dickens makes us sometimes shed. It is well to sympathize with sorrow, but to sympathize with it to such an extent as to make strong-heartedness give way to soft-heartedness is to deprive us of the power to help the sorrowful. For example, we all, perhaps, become somewhat maudlin over Little Nell; but, then, Little Nell grown up in "Little Dorrit;" grown up in Lucie Manette, of "The Tale of Two Cities;" grown up in Esther Summerson, of the "Bleak House," is a veritable character, competent, through pathetic sentiment, to impress us with the highest obligations of duty. The affectionateness and self-devotion of these characters are all steeped in an atmosphere of moral beauty. I think that Esther Summerson is the most perfect character of its kind in romantic literature, thoroughly pure, sweet, kindly, maidenly, and humane. Mr. Peggotty, again, in "David Copperfield," is a wonderful example of the power of goodness to irradiate the homeliest form, and lift into grandeur the most uncouth expression. Human nature itself is indebted to Dickens for such delineations of its possibilities of purity, tenderness, and humble moral strength.

There is quite a crowd of such characters in Dickens-land, and they thoroughly Christianize it. What a discourse on filial duty is condensed in the advice given by Mr. George, in "Bleak House," to young Woolwich! "The time will come when this hair of your mother's will be gray, and this forehead all crossed and recrossed with wrinkles. Take care, while you are young, that you can think in those days, '*I* never whitened a hair of her dear head, *I* never marked a sorrowful line in her face!'"

What a living sermon is that preached at the death-bed of little Paul Dombey! How it melts, humanizes, elevates, every

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heart! " . . . The old, old fashion! The fashion that came in with our first garments, and will last unchanged until our race has run its course and the wide firmament is rolled up like a scroll. The old, old fashion—Death. Oh, thank God! all who see it, for that older fashion yet, of Immortality!"

And what a wild, agonized cry is that which bursts from the heart of David Copperfield as he surveys for the last time his friend, tranquilly sleeping, and thinks of the inexpiable crime he so soon after committed:

"Never more—Oh, God forgive you, Steerforth!—to touch that passive hand in love and friendship. Never, never more!"

And then there is the death of Davy Copperfield's mother, as told to him by his old nurse, Peggotty. "'Peggotty, my dear,' she said, 'put me nearer to you,' for she was very weak. 'Lay your good arm under my neck,' she said, and turn me to you, for your face is going far off, and I want it to be near.' I put it as she asked, and oh, Davy! the time came when my first parting words to you were true—when she was glad to lay her poor head on her stupid, cross old Peggotty's arm—and she died like a child that had gone to sleep."

And then there is in "Bleak House" that wonderfully depicted ride which Esther Summerson takes with Mr. Bucket, the detective, to follow and save her mother, Lady Dedlock, who had fled from her haughty husband's house to die at the gate of the paupers' cemetery, where her early love, Esther's wild father, was buried! "She lay there, with one arm creeping round a bar of the iron gate and seeming to embrace it. She lay there, a distressed, unsheltered, senseless creature." Esther does not think it is her mother, but her attendant, Jenny. "I saw," she says, "but did not comprehend, the solemn and compassionate look in Mr. Woodcourt's face. I saw, but did not comprehend, his touching the other on the breast, to keep him back. I saw him stand uncovered in the bitter air, with a reverence for something. But my understanding for all this was gone. I even heard it said between them—'Shall she go?' 'She had better go. Her hands should be the first to touch her. They have a higher right than ours.' I passed on to the gate, and stooped down. I lifted the heavy head, put the long dark hair aside, and turned the face. And it was my mother, cold and dead."

This is essential pathos, going down to the very roots of the thing in the human heart. And how numerous the examples are, spread all over Dickens's works!

And now, in conclusion, let us celebrate, without any qualification, this humane man of genius, who, whether he makes us laugh or weep, makes us better; who cheers us with a fresh confidence in human nature, and with an intenser sympathy for the poor, the despised, and the wretched; who has done immense good, while he has seemed only to diffuse vast entertainment; who has peopled the imagination with a new company of ideal beings, which the heart clings to and will not allow to die; who never did or said anything mean or base, or refrained from stigmatizing meanness and baseness when they crossed his path; who never was corrupted by success, but was as kindly and genial in life as in his writings; who tried sincerely to live in accordance with what he honestly believed to be true and right; and who, while he will ever hold a high rank among the great novelists of the world, will also, and *through* his novels, hold a still more precious position among the great benefactors of the human race.

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KING SOLOMON'S DREAM.

By Graham R. Tomson.

Between the darkness and the dawn
  Three signs were seen of me:
One, white as ivory new-sawn,
And greener one than wet spring grass,
And one, more red than blood (Alas!
  A sight most drear and dree);
    All these things verily
    Mine eyes did see.

Three ladies in a twilight space
  Did sit and spin alway:
The first, a damsel cold of grace,
With snow-white spindle featly wove;
The second (singing low of love)
  With spindle green as bay,
    Smiled soft and looked on me—
    Yea—even she.

But that third lady of the three,
  I might not see her face,
Or whether fair or foul was she,
For veils wound close about her head
(Both veil and spindle were blood-red);
  And still she span apace,
    Singing right joylessly,
    Nor looked on me.

The first I spake with of the three,
  The virgin pure and pale,
Full fair and exquisite to see,
More delicate than spring sunlight,
Crowned with closed buds of lilies white
  And swathed in pearl-white veil.—
    Sweet lady, even she
    Did answer me!

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"When Eve, in woe and sorrow sore,
Came forth from Paradise,
The dear-bought bough her hand still bore:
She had no carven coffer fair
Nor ivory chest, to lay it there:
The tears from her sweet eyes
Did fall to water it,
As was most fit.

"She said, 'Alas! this goodly bough
Hath cost me grievous woe,
Yet must I guard it even now,
Yea, surely will I plant it here.'—
Full fast the tree grew (bought so dear!)
Right large, and white as snow;
A token stood the tree
Of Eve's virginity."

The maiden ceased, and turned her head,
No word she spake again.
The second, fair with white and red,
And loose hair crowned with clustering vine,
Did turn her lustrous eyes on mine.—
"But I, of Love's great gain"
She said, "Of Love and Pain
Sing, not in vain.

"Above, the snow-white branches spread,
Below, the dewy grass—
In sooth a goodly bridal-bed—
And then the tree waxed great and green
With broad, fair leaves of glossy sheen,
And there it came to pass
That Eve, in travail sore,
Prince Abel bore."

The third dame cried, "Ah, bitter woe!"—
Full sore a little space
She wrung her hands, then, moaning low,
She said, "Blood-red the tall tree grew
When so Prince Cain his brother slew:
Mild Abel, fair of face,
Where first he drew soft breath
Received the death."

She ceased, and fell to sorrowing;
Then I—"Still sorrow ye?"
Her speech broke forth again, "O King,
In your fair garden straightly set
That wondrous tree is growing yet.—"
"And still shall these things be?"
"Even so," she answered me,
"Yea, verily."

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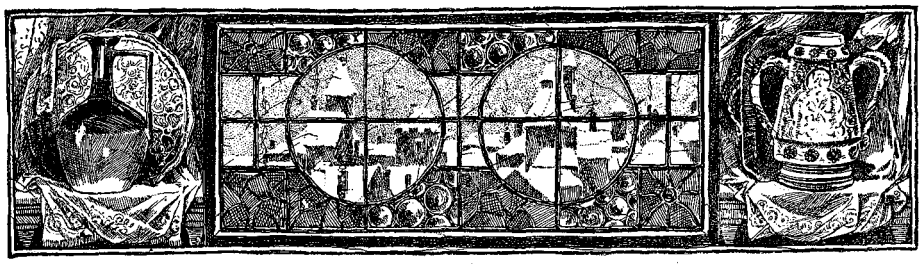

THE TINCTURE OF SUCCESS.

By T. R. Sullivan.

AS HAZARD read the last words of the manuscript, Purkitt knocked the ashes from his long clay pipe and looked up with a cheerful smile. Cheerfulness, however, was the main characteristic of his somewhat puffy little personality; and on that unwrinkled forty-five-year-old face, rendered rosier than usual to-night by frequent draughts of gin-and-water, a smile had no more promise in it to anxious eyes than has a morning rainbow.

"Well?" said the other, faintly.

He was a man under thirty. But Time had kept him in mind, evidently. Already he looked old. His face was thin, pale, and worn; at first sight of it one might well have wondered when he had last eaten a good dinner, and what his next meal was likely to be.

"Well," returned Purkitt, irresolutely. Then, after a moment: "I think your style is charming."

Hazard tossed down his work with a show of carelessness. But one sheet of it fell from the table upon the dusty floor; and he picked this up, to brush it with his coat-sleeve before replying.

"Thank you, Dick!" said he. "I see—it is a failure."

Dick Purkitt pushed forward his empty glass and twirled it about with finger-tips unmarred by any deformity of labor. They had toiled early and late, but only with the pen.

"Victor, dear boy, you did not expect me to call the tale a work of genius, worthy of—well, say Yarrow—did you?"

"No, Dick, of course not. But I did hope to show a bit of progress; perhaps, even, to stir your British public up a little. I worked so hard; and they will no more be stirred by it than that old duffer in the corner there."

Speaking thus, with eyes that in vain strove not to glisten, he indicated a man whom they had found asleep by the gray embers of the tavern-fire. Dick studied for a moment the drooping figure, with its folded arms and hat drawn down over the eyes in deep, serene unconsciousness, still the same.

"He has not turned a hair," said he. "Yes, the British public is like that. You must strike a higher note to rouse it. And yet the story is a good story. Not Yarrow, but still——"

"Yarrow—always Yarrow!"

"Dear boy, have patience. Even Yarrow had to learn his letters. Look at me! Grinding the mill for five-and-twenty years, and still at it—a hack writer on the *Tavistock Review*."

"Yes, but—" Hazard stopped, and sighed.

"I know. You want to tell me your art is different. That is true, and I honor you for it. I keep the beaten path, and you must climb. Even now,

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I could not begin to do that thing of yours. Send it to the magazines."

"The magazines!" echoed Hazard, bitterly.

"Well, Magazine, then. You're too sensitive; that's one of your troubles. Shall I tell you another? Your work is imitative—far too suggestive of your master, who is Yarrow, I say, whether you like it or not. Give him the cold shoulder. You are young, but you have lived. Take some passage of your life, and put your heart into it. If it hurts you, so much the better. The public is as cruel as a Vestal virgin. I tell you, it wants blood. Where did you dine to-day?"

"Here, in the Silver Cross. Jugged hare and apple-tart—not a bad dinner for one-and-threepence. It's the best luncheon-bar I know in London."

"I thought you looked hungry; so am I—as a horse. I say, bring us supper, will you? Cold joint, and plenty of it—the best cheese you've got. Beer for this gentleman, and gin for me. As you say, Hazard, one lives well here for Fleet Street. *Per me*, I prefer the Bristol. For heaven's sake, William, coax that fire up with another coal or two. Don't you know it's snowing outside? Now then, Hazard, here's the beef. Pitch right in—that's American, isn't it? Show your Yankee spirit, and make victory of defeat, as you did at Bunker's Hill. Damn it, man, Victor is your name!"

All this stir in the little back parlor at last roused its third occupant, who stretched his legs, yawned, and growled; then rose, buttoned his heavy dark coat about him, and thrust his hands into the pockets; finally, with a nod to Purkitt, he passed into the bar, mumbling to himself, inaudibly, as he went. They heard him shuffle on to the street-door and go out.

Hazard had looked for an instant at his dark face, deeply furrowed, with an iron-gray mustache large enough to cover the lips and half the military tuft upon the chin; with enormous eyebrows, black as jet, under which the eyes shrunk away into what seemed empty sockets; yet in them lurked a scrutiny so keen that the boy had lowered his own eyes at once, catching his breath with something like a chill. The jar of the closing door was a relief.

"Who is that man?" he asked.

"His name is Rose," said Purkitt. "Odd chap, isn't he? Some men like him; I don't, or I would have asked him to stay. Queer devil—they tell absurd stories of him."

"What stories?"

"Oh, mere rot. They say he dabbles in the black arts, the occult and the unknowable. He may deal with the devil, for aught I know; there are various ways of doing that, and his looks are in favor of him. But the rest is rubbish."

"What is the rest? Go on."

"Well, that he can live forever, if he pleases. That he pursues the philosopher's stone, and has caught up with the elixir of long life; that he is one of those German fellows—a Rosicrucian. He is shy about stating his age, and his name happens to be Rose. That's all, but it's quite enough to start the story."

"Has he no profession?"

"Yes, a capital profession. He is an inventor, who has never invented anything; with means, of course, or he couldn't exist. Drake said, the other day, he had seen his rooms; but there was nothing in them, so far as I could discover. Eat your supper, old man, and let us change the subject. I hate quackery and all its works."

They ate and drank until a late hour; that is, one made a good meal, and the other did the drinking. Gin agreed with him, he said, and he seemed none the worse for it. As they parted, the barmaid complimented him on his good looks; he retorting in a way that led her to blush. For a time the place rang with his boisterous mirth, and when he was gone the girl sighed, and told William that Mr. Purkitt was a nice gentleman.

Victor Hazard would have confirmed her statement, had it been made in his hearing. Purkitt took his arm and returned good advice for it, as they splashed up Fleet Street to the Strand through the wet snow-flakes, melting into grimy mud at their feet.

"Now, dear boy, do as I tell you. Send that thing off to-morrow morning, and begin on another the moment you leave the bank. Strike deep; stick the

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knife in up to the handle, and turn it round. Don't give way, whatever happens. Fight the good fight, and win. And if you get short, mind you come to me."

"Yes, Dick," said Hazard. There was something in his throat that choked off further speech; so he merely stood still, to detach himself from the friendly arm and offer his hand instead. "Good-night to you!"

"To be sure, there is the bridge; you go that way. Well, good-night! God bless you!"

And Purkitt went sliding on over another mile of the slippery pavement to his club, in Piccadilly, where other dear boys were gathered about the fire, and where he made a cheerful night of it, putting the struggles and possible successes of the young Anglo-American quite out of mind.

Hazard waited on the corner looking after his friend. His throat no longer troubled him; the tears trickled down his cheeks.

"What a good fellow!" he thought; "and how little of me he really knows! He has never had to worry about his bread-and-butter; he cannot imagine what it is."

Across the way he heard a sudden slamming of doors; and then a laughing crowd burst out upon him. The play was over at the Lyceum Theatre. The cabbies swore and shouted and lashed their patient horses. A young girl, all in white, gleamed like a will-o'-the-wisp under the columns of the portico, and disappeared. Hazard, turning away, walked on to the gate of Waterloo Bridge, paid the moderate price of solitude, and speedily it was his. Half way over he stopped to look down. The sluggish river below crept on darkly in the night, lapping filth and squalor and nameless horrors almost inconceivable, to purify itself at last in the healing water of the sea. Above him, too, there was little more than darkness; the distant lights blinked feebly, softened by the snow. All looked solemn, mysterious, death-like. It was the place of suicides—the very time of year, as the historian of statistics demonstrated long ago. Hazard smiled at it.

"There is always this," he muttered, fixing his eyes upon a single flake of snow that passed through the narrow circle illumined by the nearest bridge-lamp and then vanished: "Always this to help us out. A snow-flake on the river, in the night—gone before it strikes the water—it leaves no mark. How can a thread of talent hope to do more upon the black indifference of the world?" He leaned over the parapet, and drew back. "Not yet!" he said, and went his way resolutely, defiantly.

He lived in one of those attic-chambers on the Surrey shore, over which a loop of railway describes the wide arc of a circle between Cannon Street and Charing Cross. This ten-minute journey, with its dissolving views of the river, the Embankment, the towering landmarks of Westminster and Ludgate Hill, is one of the sights of London; one that wears well, too, and may be seen many times before the dull lens of habit blurs it. Its best side was all at Hazard's command. The outlook from his window over the sooty tiles, from the Victoria Tower on one side to the dome of St. Paul's on the other, was never twice the same. The fogs in winter did their black and yellow worst, but they were forever shifting; strange lights shone out in them; and at night they were almost sure to lift and let the stars look down. The trains thundered about his ears incessantly, but a noise that lasts is no longer a nuisance; only silence becomes painful—as on a steamship when the engine stops in mid-ocean, and one longs for the beating soul of the machine.

Victor Hazard was the son of a poor gentleman, who had pinched himself to give his boy what he considered a suitable education; then, dying suddenly, had left him alone in the world of New York, with an inordinate desire to shine before his fellow-men; his capital being a good face, a fair knowledge of the classics, an illegible hand-writing, and a fondness for society. Of dollars and cents his supply became wofully scant. Accepting, accordingly, the first clerkship offered to him, he filled it perfunctorily, but acceptably, though no prospect of his advancement was ever suggested; until his evil fortune lured him into falling in love with his employer's

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daughter, and inspired her cruelly to encourage him. She was rich, he overscrupulous; her fortune was a barrier that he conceived to be insurmountable. The entanglement might thus have prolonged itself indefinitely, had not she, growing tired of it, forced him to show his hand and beg for hers. In answer, she raised her eyebrows and wondered what he could mean. She was very sorry; she had never consciously given him cause to hope. How could he have misunderstood her so? Through an odd coincidence, but really nothing more, it happened, within a week, that her father resolved to reduce the sum-total of his salary-list by dispensing with Mr. Hazard's services. He was very sorry—the family seemed conventional in its expression of regret—but the business, etc., did not warrant, etc., etc., and Mr. Hazard could at any time rely, etc., etc., etc., upon his recommendation.

Poor Victor had been told, so often as to believe it, that a woman's "no" means "yes" at certain times. As in war the odds are all against the beleaguered city, if the invaders stand their ground, so in love dogged persistence nearly always conquers in the end. In his heart of hearts he felt that he need only wait defiantly to gain this girl's admiration, pity, love. But once more his honest scruples overcame him. She was fabulously rich, he a beggar. In a weak moment he had miserably ignored this; she had been to blame for the weakness which now led him to despise himself. He must prove to her, if possible, that he was no vulgar soldier of fortune; he must bear defeat with dignity; he could not hunt her down. He abandoned the field at once, and did his best to hate her. Can a man ever accomplish that, when he has really loved the ideal woman his fancy has created? Victor, certainly, made bad work of it; he could not, even to himself, reproach this paragon. He only had been to blame. She was too good for him, for earth; she was divine. He must never see her any more. He must put the ocean between them, and make his whole life a struggle to forget his own faultless line of beauty, eternally graven upon his heart, an indelible sorrow.

A friend, who half suspected his secret, stepped in at this critical moment and offered him an insignificant place on the staff of a great London banking-house. The pay was a mere pittance, absurdly small for his native city; he could barely live upon it, even in London. But Victor accepted the terms gratefully, laughed hunger in the face, and told his anxious friend it should be made a stepping-stone to higher things. So he fled to the great heart of civilization as to a hermitage in the desert, lost his identity, and became a toiling unit in the ant-hill, a mere mechanic of routine. He carried letters which it pleased him to destroy unpresented. He made few acquaintances, fewer friends. Dick Purkitt was the only man who could be said to have grown intimate with him. And Purkitt did not know him long before he felt that he should never know this odd stick of an American any better. Victor had been drawn to him, but not closely, never losing his head, never expanding. Dick remained baffled, but still interested; he took what Victor gave, and he asked no more; abused him for his false pride, and inwardly admired it.

Day after day Hazard bent over his desk in the huge, dingy counting-house, multiplying infinitely his journal-entries, till the load of dull monotony weighed upon him like the rock of Sisyphus. The room was favorably known in the City of London, and lay within a stone's throw of Threadneedle Street; it was low, ill-ventilated, and it quartered a small army of the overworked and underpaid beneath its glass ceiling, which admitted foggy light, in a qualified, commercial way, to fifty hollow-eyed and sallow faces. They could see, could be seen; what more was needed? By good or bad luck the American had found his allotted place near the only window in this dreary tread-mill. He could look up from his worn page, across a flagged court to the eastern wall of an old City church, whose chancel windows had at least imagination in them—on the other side. Too often he caught himself trying to trace out their design, idly wondering about their colors. He never took the trouble to study them from the proper point within the church—he never really cared a button

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for them. His day-dreams merely took this fragmentary shape in the beginning, piling up afterward like storm-clouds between him and the church-wall, till they had obscured it. Then his neighbor at the desk, alert, fond of work, and quick at figures, would jog his elbow, chaffing him.

"How many stones are there in that wall, Hazard? Are you going to build one like it?"

And the lynx-eyed bank-manager, noting Victor's lapse in duty, would make a mental black-mark against the truant understanding, and whisper to himself:

"Hazard is a £100 clerk—that's all."

Finally, those dark stones did their destined mischief, and founded in Victor's heart the accursed fabric of a literary ambition. Why not, he thought, turn one's imagination to account, and help out one's bread-and-butter with *vin ordinaire*, if not with the intoxicating draught of fame? His first venture proved likewise his first misfortune, for he found an editor willing to accept it. All seemed plain sailing now. His boat was launched; he had but to let out the sheet and fly before the favoring breeze. But, alas, the sky soon grew overcast, the sea troubled; the winds blew counter, or they died away. His ideas came to him slowly, painfully. His little birds chirped, but did not sing; he set them free to beat the air with feeble wings, to be swept back and die unheard. The fumes of the lamp got into his brain and clogged it. He tossed through sleepless nights, while visionary clots of blood, those danger-signals of the unresting train of thought, swam before his staring eyes. Then the long, stifling day at his desk became a terror to him, the task a torture; he went to it with haggard looks, as in a trance, performing it he knew not how. But at night he lived again, still toiling on in his garret under the stars. His own might never rise—well, so much the worse; he must do without it. He had been bitten by the tarantula; he was dancing mad, and, conscious of the mania, could only murmur to himself, in bitter consolation, the sad foreboding of the German poet:

"One taste of the immortal fruit of fame,
Like to Proserpina's pomegranate-seeds,
Ranks thee forever with the quiet shades,
And to the living thou belong'st no more." *

Now and then the tide up-bore him. When he went to press, no matter how obscurely, all his courage would revive, and, sanguine to absurdity, he would expect too much; instant recognition from the entire English-reading world; the meed of genius; a horn of plenty overflowing at his feet; in short, miracles. And when all these failed him, when the spheres coldly kept their course, indifferent to his, he would sink down, down, each time a little lower, toward a despair of suicidal depth. His temper was fitful as the flight of an arrow shot over a sunlit glacier, to miss its mark and fall into some crevasse beyond the glimpse of day.

The fit was on him that night; the fever first, and then the chill. When he begged Dick Purkitt for a hearing, he did so with the firm belief that the critic would warm at his work, would call it his best, perhaps the best that ever was. On the contrary, the old hack had hardly pricked up his ears. He had been considerate, of course—only damning with faint praise what had faintly touched him; that was enough. The fire was out in Victor's shabby lodging; at sight of the familiar room he shivered, but not with cold—only with the remembrance of the half-frenzied hope he had carried away from the place earlier in the evening. His first impulse was to burn the ineffective masterpiece in the sputtering candle-flame. But he thought better of it; and mailed the manuscript to one of his editors, early the next morning. Thus following Dick's advice—in part. For he did not begin upon another, did not even grope for a new idea; but only stared at nothing in a state of mental torpor, like a criminal awaiting sentence.

At least a fortnight must go by without an answer; and the end of the year, always an anxious time with Victor, was close at hand. He needed money; he was not in debt, but on New Year's Day there would be accounts to settle. He had been a long time in the bank, had never missed an hour, never asked for

* Grillparzer's *Sappho*; Ellen Frothingham's translation.

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an increase of pay. It occurred to him now to submit his case with becoming modesty, mildly to request what he felt should be granted ungrudgingly at the first suggestion. If he was worth anything, he told himself, he was worth more than a paltry £100. Yet he postponed the purposed interview, nervously appointing to-morrow for it, and then to-morrow, until at last Christmas and Boxing-Day came next. Little time remained to lose; it would be better to decide the question before the holiday. He watched his opportunity, and at last caught the manager at leisure and alone. He was no advocate; his voice faltered in the middle of a disjointed phrase; the stern features of the judge gave him no encouragement; the answer was short and to the point.

"There are many young men in London, Mr. Hazard, who would be glad to do your work for £100."

Mr. Hazard admitted that, but——

"We cannot consider it; I am sorry, but the fault is your own. They tell me you are trying to serve two masters; you will never get on so in London. Do one thing or the other, and put your heart into it. That is the best answer I can give you. Good-morning!"

The atom dropped back silently to its place in the swarm. In that short absence a black fog, dense, impenetrable, like a funeral-veil, had settled down outside the window. Shreds of it even drifted in-doors and set the weaker ones to coughing; they laughed and coughed again, vaporously. The gas was lighted, and soon burned out. Even London resources fail with sudden pressure put upon them. Candles glimmered about, and in the dim, smoky atmosphere the working-day went on. Nothing short of a convulsion of nature can snap the main-spring of mercantile routine. Victor's senses were benumbed, and the hours seemed short to him; he forgot to give his usual sigh of relief when the clock struck, and the night-birds were set free. The fog had grown thicker, heavier. He made his lonely way through it, from lamp to lamp, over the viaduct, along Holborn, in and out of the intricate Drury Lane quarter, to a stuffy coffee-house in Covent Garden, where, if the dinner was frugal, the beer was of the best. The foaming tankard quickened him; he could think now. But there was too much Christmas jollity in the place for him. He went out, took the shortest cut to the Strand, and reaching it, hesitated at the street-corner. The sight was curious. Link-boys ran before the horses, shouting and brandishing their torches; a hurrying glare, with the barbaric light of the past in it, that flashed by and left a deeper gloom. It might have been a scene of Shakespeare's time. The shops were crowded. In the one behind him, sprigs of holly and mistletoe gleamed red and white through the frosted panes. After a moment's thought, Victor turned his face toward Westminster. The way home was longer, but that bridge cost nothing. When he came to Charing Cross, the fog had lifted a little; he went on, and it grew lighter; now he could see the shining clock-face in the Albert Tower; as he passed under it the four quarters chimed out musically, and the great bell struck the hour—ten o'clock. So late? Well, to-morrow was a holiday. The lights glanced in the river, the steamers whistled, the omnibuses rattled along the bridge. Overhead a star sparkled, but he did not see it. He was thinking of to-morrow.

"Do one thing or the other, and put your heart into it."

Why? For what unprofitable purpose? Why not let the tired muscles relax, the worn brain-cells cease their reproduction?

Straightway he recalled some lines of his own from a published story that had escaped critical notice, so far as he knew; and he made them the burden of his walk in mournful reiteration:

Man, in the struggle of life, is like a poor bull, baited in the arena, pricked and goaded and tortured he knows not why; finding no escape; before, behind him, only a great darkness closing in.

"That is true!" he cried, as he turned the key in his lock. "Yes, that is true."

On the table lay a roll of paper, which he tore apart. His manuscript was returned with a printed word of formal thanks—rejected. It was no less than should have been foreseen, but it struck Victor with the pang of a bullet.

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"He might have written," he said; then dropped where he stood, in tears.

After a time his face cleared itself, and came out white and calm, firmly set with a new resolve. He tossed the manuscript, with a dozen others, into the grate, and made a bonfire, crouching before it and warming his hands at the blaze. He blew out his lamp, and paced the room awhile in the dark. Then, with a strange lightness of manner, he went back to the streets, leaving his door flung open wide behind him. The fog was almost gone, the air clearer and colder.

"To-morrow will be fine," he thought, following briskly a familiar course toward the City—not that by which he had come, but the other, the shorter one, to Waterloo.

He smiled pleasantly at the toll-gatherer, as he paid his fee. On the bridge he met only one man—a muffled figure, breathing through a black band drawn tight over the lower part of the face, by way of precaution, not unusual, against the penetrating dampness of the English winter. The steps died away behind him; he stopped at the middle of the bridge, and turned into a niche over one of its great piers. The light in his face had gone out; he was cold, now, and trembling; he leaned against the dank wall to steady himself. At that moment the mellow chimes of midnight, ushering in the Christian festival, pealed and echoed in a hundred spires; the air seemed filled with music—his ears hardly heard that sweetest of all sounds. He swung himself forward upon the wall.

——*only a great darkness closing in.*

Nearer—nearer. Now.

He had spoken no word. It was his action only that a voice behind him interrupted.

"Not yet!" said the voice. A strong hand grasped him by the shoulder and pulled him back.

"Let me go!" he cried, imploringly; and, turning, found himself face to face with the stranger who had just passed him on the bridge. The figure unmuffled itself, removed the dark bandage from its mouth and chin, and stood before him revealed, recognizable.

"Mr. Rose!" he gasped.

"You know my name, then. I see—Purkitt told you. Yes, it is I—Merlin Rose."

"Merlin Rose," repeated Victor, as though the name were a spell to conjure with. There was a kind of enchantment in this mysterious presence, close upon him at this place and time.

"Mr. Hazard, is it not?"

"Yes."

"You wonder why I turned about. It was because I know your work, and like it—your brain-work, I mean. It may be that I can help you—if not, no harm is done."

"You know my work?" said Victor, startled and dazed by the unexpected word of praise.

"Yes; I once read a passage about life, that I have always remembered."

Thereupon he quoted the gloomy lines driven back that night, like spectres, to haunt the brain that had conceived them.

"Well, it is the truth," sighed Victor, in reply.

"An imperfect truth. You have stared at the sun through smoked glass. For better or worse, it was your only source of daylight. You need not have stared at it at all."

Victor's eyes filled, but he did not answer. The truth expressed itself in these lines also.

"Come!" said the other, in a kindly voice. "I have admired your courage—let me do so still. You may be sure of my sympathy. Walk on with me out of the night-air, which I find dangerous. We will talk of your work—it interests me."

Then Victor broke down completely. And his new friend soothed him with a quiet word or two and with gentle touches of the hand, as he would have comforted a tired child. They turned from that awful brink of suicide into the living tide of London—ebb-tide now. Even the Strand was almost deserted; the theatre-doors were shut, the jewelled eyes of their transparencies put out. But the loitering cab-man still hailed them from his perch; the wine-shops kept open house, suffused with warm light, murmurous with voices.

As they walked and talked, Victor drew closer to his companion, deeply interested; yet looking askance at him

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with a mixture of awe and fascination, partly due, no doubt, to Purkitt's tale. He had never seen so singular a face. It was gaunt, yet handsome; the complexion a deep olive, very clear; the heavy wrinkles in it came and went, sometimes vanished altogether. The eyes were still mere suggestions, remote, immovable points of blackness under the bushy, restless eyebrows. Something invisible cast over the man a perpetual shadow; but through it he spoke emphatically, hopefully; his praise took the form of a promise: Heights could be attained, rewards reaped, depending only upon courage. There was a way, a sure one—the royal road, it might be called—if one dared try it. Then he hinted at a certain process to be undergone. Many had ventured to test its efficacy, always with a favorable result. But—and here he turned upon Victor that blank, scrutinous look, sharper in its effect than the chill of the winter's night—it wanted courage.

What of that promise? Was there really some infusion or decoction to transmute mediocrity into genius?—a subtle elixir, not of long life, but of inspiration? Victor put a question, apparently foreign to the matter, but nevertheless a leading one.

"Are you a doctor by profession?" he asked.

"No, an engraver," replied the friend, whom he half liked, half dreaded.

An engraver! What a puzzling answer! An odd chap this, as Dick had called him.

"Ah! an inventor, too, I suppose," continued Victor, quoting a part of Purkitt's jocose description.

"Yes; who has never invented anything," returned Mr. Rose, completing the jest with startling accuracy. "Here we are; wait a moment until I can strike a light! The stairs are steep."

He had stopped before a house in a narrow street curving out of St. Martin's Lane toward Leicester Square. On the ground-floor Victor noticed the closed shutters of a shop. One short flight, partitioned off from it, led them to the apartment overhead, where Mr. Rose inhabited three or four small rooms, low-studded and plainly furnished. One of these seemed to be his work-shop, for it contained a drawing-board littered with engraver's tools; passing this disorder by, he unlocked a small door and ushered his guest into a circular alcove, fitted up with some degree of luxury—a windowless place, heavily draped with curtains of dusky red that fell together over the door-way. Upon the low, concave ceiling a map of the world was painted. A fire burned brightly; two easy-chairs were drawn before it, and light streamed down upon them from an illuminated clock, the only ornament of the chimney-piece; on its glass dial seven clear-cut stars were scattered irregularly; through them the light shone more brilliantly, but with a soft, celestial radiance, white and still.

Over the clock hung a drawing in red chalk—a young man's portrait, suggesting rather than resembling the first Napoleon.

"My own," said Mr. Rose, following the thought in Victor's eyes. "A good likeness—once."

And Victor, looking closely, saw that the sketch was signed: "Gérard."

On a round table, in the middle of the room, lay a thick folio, bound in leather, with metal clasps which Mr. Rose drew back. Then he lifted one of the heavy covers and let it fall again.

"If I understand you rightly," he said, "you want certain things which I can give you, perhaps, should you trust me fearlessly."

"If you mean the world's notice and encouragement—yes," Victor replied.

"In one word—success," continued Mr. Rose. "But are you ready to pay the price? Not to me, in money—our vows prohibit that. We do not sell; we give. I refer to your own act of sacrifice, that calls for superhuman courage."

"What do you mean?"

"This: Will you buy fame with mortal breath? Will you run your allotted course, with all its trials, its possible triumphs, its unquestionable reverses? Or will you snatch the Promethean fire, write your name in flaming letters, and die when this is done, shortening your life, it may be, by fifty of its years?"

"More!" cried Victor—"by all but one! Give me one glorious year, to

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leave its mark behind it, and take the rest! Death comes but once. Let mine come so."

"Ah!" sighed Mr. Rose, "how many of you have made me the same answer! Reflect, before it is too late. Even for immortality the cost is fearful."

"I have reflected," Victor returned. "In my dreams I have often made this very choice. If you can really offer it, my courage will not fail me. I am ready; place me where I can choose."

In answer, Mr. Rose opened the book before him.

"That you may see I am in earnest," said he, "read a few of the names that are written here. All these have in turn submitted themselves to me. Their lasting renown is your best security. I am to be trusted. See! Not one, that, living, was not famous; that, dying, did not take his place among the stars. Read! Read!"

All the earlier pages of the volume were sealed together; but, where it had opened, the loose leaves were inscribed with many signatures of the noble dead. Victor turned them slowly, coming at last to the name of a man still alive, already a celebrity. He started at the sight of it, recognizing, at once, the hand of his master—Yarrow. All beyond was blank.

"I make but one condition," said Mr. Rose, as he put the pen into Victor's hand; "and that is absolute secrecy. You will never speak of this visit, or of me. Under the world's eye, we do not know each other; remember that. You give me your word?"

"Yes," said Victor, signing without a moment's hesitation. "What more is there to do?"

"Your part is done," replied the other, in a low voice. "Sit here by the fire—a little nearer—so. Look up at the clock. I shall not detain you long."

His words died away in whispers. The minute-hand stood still. The flame behind it was steady, colorless; the stars were cold, like planets. Had they, like the planets, burned for ages? Could this unknown benefactor be in truth a Rosicrucian? No matter. His command must be obeyed, blindly, blindly.

Victor bowed his head. Dusky spaces opened out before him. The power to move seemed lost; he could only stare down the black, endless distances, and listen to a faint sound, like the drum of a bird far off in a forest. It is a dream, he thought. A sharp pain shook him. No, it is death, the after-thought came quivering. Then he was there again, before the clock; a star was gone; he counted them once more; yes, there were only six upon its face; but scarcely one half-minute had passed over his head, and in the chair beside him sat Mr. Rose, smiling, with a small flask in his hand.

"I have done my part," he said. "The process is performed, and here I give you the result. Use it wisely."

Victor examined the flask. It contained a clear liquid, faintly tinged with rose-color.

"What is this?" he asked.

Mr. Rose smiled again.

"You may call it, if you please," said he, "the Tincture of Success."

"I see," said Victor, smiling back at him—"the Frenchman's absinthe, or your English opium—a draught of inspiration. Your health! I drink to you."

Mr. Rose caught his hand.

"Not one drop of it!" he cried. "Go home, and mix that with your ink. To-morrow, take your pen and write; without undue excitement, slowly, thoughtfully, laboriously, as most men do."

"Is that all?" Victor asked, with an air of disappointment. The royal road, then, was the turnpike still.

"No. When the ink is gone, bring the flask to be filled again. Come at this same hour, between night and morning. Remember, silence. No word of this to any one. Good-night! Dismiss all fear of discouragement; that time is past. For you, the struggle of life is over."

Victor shivered. These parting words conveyed a double meaning. But he had made his choice, had signed the compact; it was irrevocable. That fear, too, must be dismissed, if possible.

Weeks went by, quietly enough; but, before long, he felt that an unaccountable change had come over him. By day, he worked at the bank with a feverish lightness, like that preceding his arrested act of suicide. At night, his ink flowed

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more freely than of old. His thoughts came thick and fast; it was hard to hold them back, to write cautiously, in obedience to Mr. Rose's warning. His first manuscript, sent out with something of his former distrust and hesitancy, was at once accepted, afterward, in print, warmly praised. Others soon followed it; perceptibly he gained in reputation. At the end of six months, when his flask had been filled for the third time, he was called the rising young author. Then, turning his back upon his irksome employment in the City, he trusted wholly to his pen, and to the mysterious influence that guided it; produced his first important work; was known to fame.

The subtle process, to which he owed so much, varied only in degree. Always the same chair awaited him; always he whirled away into the same outer darkness. But each time, while the gloom grew vaster and more oppressive, the distant drumming sound came nearer, and was followed by a sharper pain, a certainty of death more imminent and more appalling. Always, when he woke, another star had disappeared from the clock-face. Yet always no appreciable moment had been wasted. There sat his generous host, smiling inscrutably, watching him with eyes he could not see; bestowing the priceless gift, then curtly dismissing him; reluctant, even, to accept his thanks. Once only, Victor ventured to prolong his visit, to describe his sensations, to beg for some word of explanation. But Mr. Rose shook his his head mournfully, and laid his finger upon his lips. And Victor knew that he was never to know more.

Dick Purkitt had been the first to congratulate him. At the second stage of progress, the good fellow threw up up his hat and cheered.

"I always knew you had it in you, dear boy. Damn it, didn't I tell you so? Your name is Victor. Keep it up—keep it up!"

And then, when Victor left the garret and the bank, moving northward and westward into comfortable lodgings, Dick called upon him, and embraced him with tears of joy in his eyes. Suddenly he stopped, holding the rising author off at arm's length, inspecting him in his critical way.

"I say, young-un, what's the matter? You look poorly. Are you overworked? What is it, man?"

"Nothing," said Victor.

But Dick shook his head uneasily. Did he sleep? Did he eat? Did he take his constitutional? Something must be devilish wrong. What was it?

"Nothing," Victor insisted.

Nothing; yes, nothing he could explain. But there was something devilish wrong, indeed—a haunting terror, constant, merciless, indefinable, of which he could not speak. For him the future had become the present; the sun no longer shone. His horizon-line was lost, and he walked in twilight on the verge of a gulf beset with shadows. The nameless dread consumed him like a wasting disease. He hardly knew his own eyes in the glass; they had a restless, hunted look, forever turning backward over the shoulder which Mr. Rose had grasped, as if they feared an encounter with the supernatural. His one relief was in his work; discovering that, he gave himself up to it with untiring devotion. Success followed hard upon success; rich rewards lay heaped around him; even the voice of petty jealousy was hushed; and as the note of triumph swelled louder and deeper, into one long, harmonious acclaim, he resigned love, liberty, everything, for that, accepting the substitute eagerly, gratefully, with a fierce, inhuman joy. For this he had given the death-blow to his own happiness; but he knew no remorse and no repentance; he was borne on in speechless agony, unflinching.

One day there came a letter that stirred him. It was from a man he had never known, once his chosen master—Yarrow. The veteran conqueror had turned hermit, producing little of late, fencing himself off from the world. So it happened that Victor and he had never met. The message was an expression of his delight in the fine quality of the younger man's work, a wish that they might know each other. He was ill, and, therefore, could not call upon Mr. Hazard. Would not Mr. Hazard waive ceremony, and come to him? Victor did so, immediately. He had long desired such an interview; it was

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now brought about in the best possible way, giving promise of pleasure to them both. Instead of that, it proved on both sides extremely painful. Victor was shown through a splendid house into a darkened chamber, where the sick man sat, propped up with pillows, tossing and turning restlessly. As he came forward, Yarrow's look of welcome changed to one of deep compassion.

"You, too—" he murmured; then checked himself, and offered his hand in silence.

And Victor, at first, could say nothing. Death was written in the face; he knew the lines by heart—he had learned them in his own. They talked awhile in broken whispers, each struggling for self-control. It was useless; the open secret was there; they could neither mention nor ignore it. So they parted as they had met, silently, with blurred eyes and trembling lips, their sympathy expressed only in a lingering, convulsive clasp of hands.

A few hours later, Victor Hazard paid his seventh and, as it proved, his last visit to Mr. Rose. The signs for the moment were all the same. He lay in the dark, bound hand and foot; the noise began, the deadly pain followed; but now, for the first time, the sound defined itself; clearly, it could only be the sharp, continuous rattle of hammers plied by dexterous hands. He woke with a start, to find himself alone, holding the flask once more refilled. But the clock burned dimly; not a single star was left in it; and the noise, for once, did not cease; he had brought it back with him; it was there in the house, echoing around him, above, below, at his very feet. He called his host by name. No one answered; he was, indeed, left quite alone. He found the door, and went out into the work-shop. There stood the drawing-board with the tools lying upon it; another object, too, that caught his eyes, attracting him—a shining strip of silver, upon which had been engraved two dates, a name. He started, turned faint, and clutched the table. The name was Yarrow.

He waited there for some time in a kind of stupor, fearing to move, lest at a step he should fall insensible. Meanwhile, the noise went on. He could not endure it. He must get out into the air. The street was very near, the staircase short; he knew his way perfectly. With a painful effort, he dragged himself slowly down, supported, as he went, by the partition-wall. Ah! The noise grew louder, coming from the shop, of course. What were they doing there? He had never seen the place; it had been black and silent always. What journeymen were busy in it now, at such an hour, hammering, hammering, as though they would wake the dead? Here was the street-door; the handle turned, the fresh air revived him. Through the barred shutters at his side there peeped a ray of light. Where light was, he could see. He gave one look, only one. The shop was an undertaker's. The men were driving nails into a coffin.

He recoiled, shuddering. Something hurt his hand. It was only his precious flask, clinched a shade too tightly. He flung it from him now, with all his might. He heard the glass strike the opposite wall and shiver into fragments. Then he staggered away, muttering incoherently, losing himself in the night-fog, wandering over London; but somehow bringing himself out at his own door, beating at it; to be found there by the servants, a stained and draggled heap upon the threshold. To be told long afterward, that, at this very moment, the mighty presses of Fleet Street, as they rose and fell in harsh, metallic rhythm, to note the price of corn, the last division of the House, all affairs of all men, great and small alike, were stamping out with iron feet the life and death of Yarrow.

That morning Victor Hazard woke delirious, in a raging fever. He rallied, sunk, became gradually weaker, and never left his room again. Doctors consulted over his case, called it hard names, and shook their heads, impotent as Belshazzar's soothsayers. Through it all, his old friend, Dick Purkitt, was constant at his bedside. And now, at last, Victor returned Dick's friendship, confided in him, even to that unfinished romance of early life, the broken round of a ladder leading to the clouds. But one secret he still kept back; he never spoke of Mr. Rose; never so much as hinted at the Tincture of Success.

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One day Dick found him lying there with a sealed package in his hand, looking at it doubtfully, turning it about with thin, nervous fingers.

"What is that?" Dick asked.

Victor held it up, showing the address of a certain Miss Ashburnham in New York. Underneath he had written: "After my death to be delivered."

"Ah!" said Dick, "now I understand."

"Understand? What?"

Then he was told that often in his delirium he had worried about some letters, undoubtedly these, that were sometimes to be burned, sometimes sent off by the next post.

"Yes," said Victor, "her letters. I have always kept them so. Burn the package, Dick. I added a line of my own, long ago; to receive it now might give her pain."

"Let her have it," Dick replied. "She deserves to suffer, but she won't. You can't hurt her as she hurt you. Send it it along."

"No; we will burn them."

And they were burned, unopened.

It had now become apparent that Victor could not live through the week. Three days later he showed Dick another letter, just received, from Miss Ashburnham.

It was a long letter, and its real significance lay all between the lines. She had followed his work, had always admired it. She knew he was ill, but not seriously, she hoped and believed. He must surely be destined to a long and happy life. Then, referring to the past, she confessed that she had been much to blame. Would he not forget the wrong she had done him? Would he not send her a line to say she was forgiven?

Without a written word of love, the letter invited a declaration in every syllable. "She thinks it worth while, now, blast her!" Dick remarked to himself. Like most bachelors of forty-five, he had his own private views of woman's gentle nature; but he waited to see what would come of it, exerting no undue influence. Victor called for a pen, that only scrawled illegibly, and slipped from his hand.

"Let me write," said Dick.

Victor shook his head.

"No; I will not answer it. I have outgrown all that. Even if I lived, I could never love her—never any woman. Burn it, Dick, as we burned the others."

He looked idly at the flame, while Purkitt stirred it with fiendish satisfaction; then he dozed away. Dick sat by, and watched him. An hour after, he woke.

"Dick," he asked, in a hoarse, labored whisper, "how long have I been at it?"

"What do you mean, Victor? At what?"

"Success," he answered, feebly—"success, I mean."

"Not quite three years, old man."

"All that? Nearer, Dick, nearer; I can't speak up. Tell me, is it real—will it last—will my work live?"

"Surely, dear boy, surely. It is great. On my soul, I believe so," said Dick, struggling to keep down the tears.

A smile stole over Victor's face, and he slept for a while longer, peacefully. Then he woke for the last time, starting up in bed, wandering.

"Dick!" he cried, tugging at his shirt, as though something stifled him. "Dick! I put my heart into it. See!"

He fell back, with the shirt torn open, revealing seven star-shaped scars upon his breast, above the heart already stilled. Dick saw and wondered at them. He never knew that they were the seven stars of Man's Destiny, the mystic symbols of the Rosicrucian brotherhood, and that through them, drop by drop, the first ingredient in the Tincture of Success had been drained away.

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ATYS.

By Edith M. Thomas.

Sweet are the sheltered, nestling vales and plains the toil of man has crowned;
I love them all, but more I love the lands that know not tilth nor bound—
Waste hills, the lordless hills eterne, and winds of heaven on heavenward ground!
Friendly the broad, embracing arms of Sylvan's oak at mid-day hot,
The chestnut-groves with dropping mast, the fruited orchard's lawny plot;
But these too long delay my feet; I leave them, and regret them not:
I heed the Mighty Mother's call, far up the shaggy mountain-side;
With her let me abide,
And listen to divine
Deep breathings from the mystic trees of fadeless, reminiscent pine.

Great Rhea goes with soft-foot steeds; their eyes are quenchless, sparkling flame;
The hot wilds bore and bred them fierce, yet do they pace subdued and tame;
No lash, no rein, controls their strength; she curbs them calling them by name.
Great Rhea goes as she was wont (yet now by mortal eyes unseen),
A crown of turrets on her head, her gaze unfathomed, searching-keen.
Her gloomy heralds hasten on, to rouse the forest high and green;
But when she gains the summit dark, no more they urge the shrilling strife
Of cymbal and of fife;
She hushes them by signs—
Hark! Atys sighing in his sleep, amid the melancholy pines!

He slumbers in some fragrant cell, smooth-rocked between the earth and sky.
Delicious Summer danced and sung, Winter with griding tread swept by;
These could not rouse him, yet a dream has power to make him start and sigh!
Remembers he how heaven could woo when heaven an earthly love would gain,
How goddess' smiles were golden days and goddess' tears were mists and rain,
When Rhea, with large-gifting hands, would share with him her wide domain?
Nay! he but sees Pessinus's flower, by stolen paths through kindly glooms;
For him her fine lip blooms,
Her eye with love-light shines—
Hark! Atys singing in his sleep, amid the dim, melodious pines!

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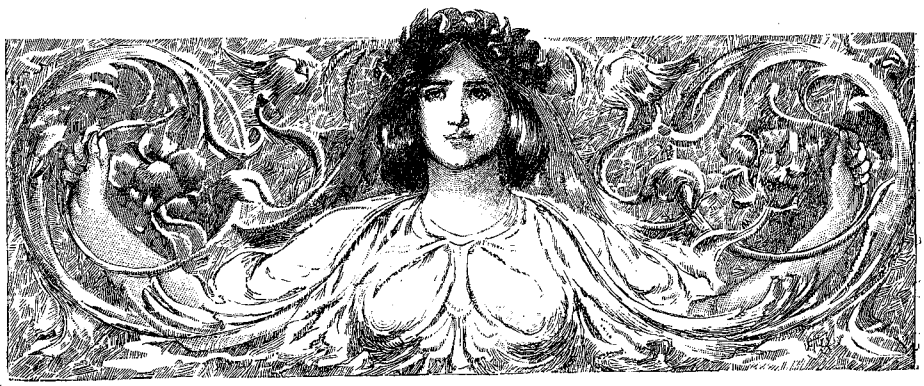
He, dreaming, sings the maiden's praise—ah, sorrow! soon he sings no more!
The goddess to the bridal came; in each dread hand a scourge she bore;
She struck with fear the marriage-guests, and smote his brain with madness sore.
His tender love he spurned, he fled; up rough, untrodden steeps he fled;
The mountain-berry was his food, the thinning turf his nightly bed;
And airily he wove of leaves a crown for his unpitied head.
The searcher craftily he shunned; yet were his footprints crimson-traced
Along the bitter waste
Of flints and thorny spines—
Hark! Atys moaning in his sleep, amid the many-wintered pines!

The rough-girt, unimpassioned trees their softening hearts did then unveil,
And close the frenzied wanderer round; thenceforward never did they fail,
Responsive to his trancèd thought, to breathe the mournful, moving tale.
Therefore, whene'er we mortals come among these chanters sombre-tressed,
Our mastered spirits flow with theirs, and are by surging moods oppressed:
We hope, exult—we madden, brood—and now are sorrowfully blest;
No murmur from his cumbered heart but wakes in ours a fellow-strain;
Our own most secret pain
The solemn wood divines—
Hark! Atys sobbing in his sleep, amid the piteous, rocking pines!

The Mighty Mother bows her down; she answers him, deep sob for sob;
She lays her hand upon his heart; she feels, she hails, its strengthening throb!
But from his lips what words are these, that thus her cheek of color rob?
She turns her face, withdraws her hand; the seals of sleep she will not break.
Undying youth, immortal dream, for love a fortressed mansion make;
Were slumber loosed, the dream remains; then, wherefore should she bid him wake?
O Mighty Mother, come away, since not to thee, in power arrayed,
But to the Phrygian maid,
His soul, released, inclines—
Leave Atys murmuring in his sleep, amid the old, dark-memoried pines!



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